THE

MANNERS

OF THE

ISRAELITES.

WHEREIN IS SEEN THE

MODEL of a plain and honeſt POLICY

FOR THE

GOVERNMENT of STATES,

AND A

REFORMATION of MANNERS.

TRANSLATED from the FRENCH of the judicious and learned

Abbé FLEURY.

By the Rev. CHARLES CORDELL,

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Errata in the Manners of the Israelites.

Page iv. *l.* 14, *for* Uttra, *r.* Ultra.----*P.* 53, *l.* 10, *for* Abia, *read* Asia.----*P.* 77, *l.* 25, *for* Medianites, *r.* Madianites.----*P.* 78, *l.* 24, *for* Medianites, *r.* Madianites.----*P.* 90, *l.* 3, *for* run, *r.* ran.----*P.* 96, *line* 17, *for* performed, *r.* preserved.---*P.* 122, *l.* 7, *for* foot, *r.* cubits.---- Ibid. *l.* 9. *for* of, *r.* or.----*P.* 124, *l.* 29, *for* not well, *r.* not so well.---*P.* 132, *l.* 28, *for* It was chiefly of, *r.* They were chiefly.----*P.* 155, *l.* 11, *after* nothing is, *add* more.----*P.* 168, *l.* 18, for *thee*, r. *you*.-----Ibid. *l.* 19, for *thou hast*, r. *you have*.----*P.* 172, *l.* 9, *for* different in, *r.* in different.----*P.* 179, *l.* 6, *for* treared, *r.* treated.---*P.* 185, *l.* 22, *after* better, *add* the.----*P.* 188, *l.* 29, *leave out* Phil.----*P.* 208, *l.* 5, *leave out* that.

A SHORT SKETCH

Of the LIFE *of* ABBE FLEURY.

CLAUDE FLEURY was born at Paris in the year 1640. His Father was a Counſellor, and the Son followed the bar, for nine years, with ſucceſs. His love for retirement and ſtudy gave him a reliſh for the Eccleſiaſtical eſtate, which he embraced, and brought with him to it all the virtues becoming that State. Preceptor to the Prince of Conti in 1672, he afterwards became Preceptor to the Comte of Vermandois. The care of, and attention he paid to his Pupil procured him the Abbey of Loc-Dieu in 1684, and the place of Sub-preceptor to the Dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, and Berri. Aſſociated to the Illuſtrious Fenelon in this honourable employment, he had the art, like this latter, of rendering virtue amiable to his Pupils by his leſſons full of mildneſs and charms, and by his own example, ſtill more perſuaſive than his leſſons. Lewis XIV. who had employed his talents, knew how to reward them. In 1706 he gave him the rich Priory of Argenteuil. When Abbé Fleury accepted this, he immediately reſigned his Abbey of Loc-Dieu into the King's hands: —ſo exact was he in obſerving the canons, whoſe authority he ſo ſtrongly inſiſts on in his

his writings. If his ambition had led him to deſire greater riches, and more elevated dignities, he might have had them: but his diſintereſtedneſs kept pace with his other virtues. He lived the life of a ſolitary at Court. A heart the moſt upright, the pureſt manners, a plain, laborious, edifying life, an unaffected modeſty, a wonderful candour, gained him the eſteem and good wiſhes of the moſt abandoned Courtiers. The Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, pitched upon him to fill the place of Confeſſor to Lewis XV. "becauſe, ſaid the Regent, he was neither Janſeniſt, Moliniſt, nor Uttramontainiſt." The choice was univerſally approved; no other fault was found with it but the ſeventy-five years of age of the Confeſſor. Thus Abbé Fleury, after having formed the heart of the Father,* formed that of the Son, and laid therein the foundation of the future happineſs of the French nation; which probably would have been complete, had Lewis XV. never ſwerved from the inſtructions of his enlightened Confeſſor. The ſeeds of virtue, ſown early in his heart, tho' too long ſtifled in that Prince by the evil counſels and contagious example of ſome diſſolute Courtiers and favourites, ceaſed not to ſprout up from time to time; and at laſt left the whole Kingdom a proof that they were never totally deſtroyed, in the edifying repentance of that Monarch, which cloſed his life under a loathſome and hideous confluent ſmall pox in the 64th year of his age.

* The Duke of Burgundy was Father of Lewis XV.

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The advanced age of Abbé Fleury obliged him to quit his employment in 1722. He died of an apoplectic fit the year following, in the 83d year of his age, when he had finiſhed the twentieth volume of his juſtly eſteemed Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. Of the works that came from his pen, I ſhall only take notice of thoſe which I have tranſlated, and are now offered to the public, and particularly recommended to the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, who wiſh to underſtand their Religion and to practiſe it.

1. Two Hiſtorical Catechiſms, a Short one, and a Larger one, to be bound together, or had ſeparately. The Authors of the *Nouveau Dictionaire Hiſtorique-Portatif* ſcruple not to pronounce this Catechiſm "to be the only one that Children ought to be taught:" *Le ſeul qu'on dût faire apprendre aux infans:* and it is indiſputably the beſt, as it gives them a greater knowledge of the grounds of Religion than any other I have ſeen. The Preliminary Diſcourſe prefixed to the Larger Catechiſm, in the tranſlation now offered the Public, is not unworthy of thoſe with which he has accompanied his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory: and theſe the Authors cited above aſſert "to be written with great elegance, purity, preciſion and ſtrength. They are the quinteſſence of the moſt ſenſible thoughts on the eſtabliſhment and the revolutions of Religion, the Cruſades, Monks, quarrels between the Empire and the Prieſthood; in a word, on the moſt important and delicate points. The Author had thoroughly ſtudied the ſubjects

jects he treats on; he discovers the evils with the greatest freedom, and points out the remedies with no less discretion." II. *The Manners of the Israelites*, of which the same Dictionary speaks thus: "A book in the hands of all the Faithful, and which may be considered as the truest Picture of the manners of the Saints in the old law." III. *The Manners of the Christians:* "a work connected with, and generally bound up with the other. The one may serve as an Introduction to Sacred, the other to Ecclesiastical History."

"An unction reigns in these two works, which, joined with a spirit of candour and truth, gains the heart of the Christian reader, and an accuracy of judgment, lights and views are there found, which enrapture the man of learning, the Philosopher and the man of taste." *Nouveau Dictionaire Historique-Portatif.* Art. FLEURY.

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APPROBATION

Of the BISHOP of MEAUX.

THE book of the Manners of the Iſraelites, compoſed with great method and accuracy by Monſ. Fleury, Prieſt of the Dioceſe of Paris, will give an idea of a manner of life, ſimple, innocent, regular, an enemy to idleneſs, and effeminacy, tranquil, though active, and ever holily employed; by which private perſons may become uſeful to themſelves, their family and country. This work prepares the way for another, wherein the ſame Author will explain the ſtill more pure Manners of the Chriſtians. It will be ſeen of what an advantage the being taught the laws of God, has been towards raiſing us and our Forefathers above all the nations of the earth. Every thing in this work tends to edification, and ſerves to illuſtrate the Catholic, Apoſtolic and Roman Faith, and the Doctrine of Manners. After a careful examination, ſuch is the teſtimony we bear to this work.

Given in the Royal Caſtle of St Germain en Laye, January 13th, 1681.

J. BENIGNE BOSSUET,
Ancient Biſhop of Condom.

THE

MANNERS

OF THE

ISRAELITES.

§I. Design of this Treatise.

THE Nation, of which God made choice to preserve the true Religion until the preaching of the Gospel, is an excellent model of human life the most conformable to nature. We see in their manners the most rational means of subsisting, of employing ourselves, of living in society. There may we learn not only Morality, but also Oeconomy and Policy, or rules of conduct in private and public life.

These Manners, however, are so different from ours, that, at first sight, they hurt us. We do not find among the Israelites either those titles of nobility, that multitude of public employments, or that diversity of ranks and conditions, which are found amongst us. They are all husbandmen and shepherds; all labour with their own hands, all are married, and reckon a large number of children a great blessing. The distinction of meats and of animals clean and unclean, and their frequent purifications, appear to us so

many troubleſome ceremonies: their bloody ſacrifices diſguſt us: We ſee, moreover, this nation prone to idolatry, on which account the ſcripture often upbraids them with their imlocility and hardneſs of heart; and the Fathers of the Church treat them as a groſs and carnal-minded people. All this, joined to a confuſed prejudice, that whatever is moſt ancient, is always moſt imperfect, eaſily induces us to believe that theſe men were brutiſh and ignorant, and that their manners are more deſerving of contempt than of admiration.

Hence, in part, it is, that the holy ſcriptures, eſpecially thoſe of the Old Teſtament, are ſo little read, and to ſo little purpoſe. The better ſort of Chriſtians, who have not as yet diveſted themſelves of theſe prejudices, are diſheartened by this exterior of foreign manners. They attribute every thing, without diſtinction, to the imperfection of the old law; or believe, that, under this outſide, are concealed myſteries they do not underſtand. Thoſe, who have not faith enough, or uprightneſs of heart, are tempted, from theſe outward appearances, to deſpiſe the ſcripture itſelf, which appears to them full of mean and low things; or elſe they draw from thence falſe conſequences to authoriſe their vices.

But, when the Manners of the Iſraelites come to be compared with thoſe of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and other nations of antiquity, whom we hold in the higheſt eſteem, theſe prejudices vaniſh. We ſee that

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that there is a certain noble ſimplicity, ſuperior to all refinements whatever: that the Iſraelites had all that was good in the manners of the other nations contemporaries with them; and were moreover exempt from the greateſt part of their faults: and that they enjoyed one incomparable advantage above them all, that of knowing the end to which every action of life ought to be referred, ſince they knew the true Religion, which is the ground-work of Morals.

We then learn to diſtinguiſh (wherever any thing diſpleaſes us in their manners) that which is really blameable; that which ariſes ſolely from the diſtance of times and places, (being indifferent in its own nature) and that, which being of itſelf indifferent, diſpleaſes us only on account of the corruption of our manners. For, a great part of the difference between them and us ariſes not from our being more enlightened by Chriſtianity, but from our following reaſon leſs. It was not Chriſtianity that introduced that great inequality of ranks and conditions; that contempt of labour; that love for play; that authority aſſumed by women and young people; or that averſion to a ſimple and frugal life, which makes us differ ſo much from the ancients. It would have been an eaſier taſk to have made good Chriſtians of theſe herdſmen and huſbandmen, we meet with in their hiſtories, with whom money was of ſo little uſe, and great fortunes ſo rare, than of our Courtiers, our Attornies, our Farmers of the revenue, and ſo many

others, who ſpend their lives in an idle and reſtleſs poverty. This will be better ſeen by the picture I ſhall draw of the MANNERS OF THE CHRISTIANS,* after having deſcribed thoſe of the Iſraelites.

After all, it is not here my deſign to write a panegyric, but to give a very plain relation, ſuch as thoſe given by travellers, who have viſited very diſtant countries. I purpoſe giving for good, what is good; for bad, what is bad; for indifferent, what is indifferent. I only deſire the reader to diveſt himſelf of all manner of prejudice, that he may not judge of theſe manners by any other rule, but that of good ſenſe and right reaſon. I requeſt of him to lay aſide the ideas peculiar to our own country and age, in order to conſider the Iſraelites in the circumſtances of the times and places in which they lived; that ſo he may compare them with the nations who were neareſt them, and, by that means, enter into their ſpirit and maxims.

For, a perſon muſt be an entire ſtranger to hiſtory, who does not ſee the great difference which the diſtance of times and place occaſions in the line of manners. We live in the ſame country that was inhabited firſt by the Gauls, and then by the Romans. How different, nevertheleſs, is our way of living from either of thoſe people, or from the French themſelves, who lived ſeven or eight hundred years ago?† And,

* This work will be publiſhed at the ſame time with the preſent.

† The Author lived near the cloſe of the laſt century, and died in 1723, in the eighty-third year of his age.

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in the preſent age, what reſemblance is there between our Manners and thoſe of the Turks, Indians, or Chineſe? If, therefore, we join together theſe two kinds of diſtance, we ſhall not be ſurpriſed that men, who lived in Paleſtine upwards of three thouſand years ago, ſhould differ from us in their manners and cuſtoms: we ſhall rather wonder at any conformity that may be found between them and us.

We muſt not, however, imagine that theſe changes are regular, or that their progreſs is always equal. It often happens, that countries nearly ſituated differ very much in point of Religion, and form of government; as, at preſent, Spain and Africa, which, under the Romans, were the ſame in thoſe two reſpects. On the other hand, there is now a great relation between Spain and Germany,* whereas there was none in the time of the Romans. The ſame may be ſaid, in proportion, with regard to the difference of times. Such as are unacquainted with hiſtory, having heard that there was formerly more ſimplicity of manners amongſt men than now, ſuppoſe that the world goes on improving; and that the higher we go up in antiquity, the more groſs and ignorant we find mankind.

This, however, is not the caſe with regard to thoſe countries, which have been ſucceſſively inhabited by different people. The revolutions, which have happened therein, have, from time to time, introduced mi-

* They both were ſubject to the Houſe of Auſtria in the laſt century, when the Author wrote.

ſery and ignorance after proſperity and politeneſs. Thus Italy is, at preſent, in a much better condition, than it was about eight hundred years ago:* but eight hundred years before that period, under the firſt Cæſars, its riches and magnificence were much greater than they are now. It is true, if we go up eight hundred years ſtill higher, towards the building of Rome, we ſhall find the ſame Italy leſs rich and leſs civilized, though, even then, extremely populous: and the higher we go beyond that period, the poorer we ſhall ſee it, and the more ſavage. Nations, like man, have their ages. The moſt flouriſhing period of the Grecian State was under ALEXANDER; that of Rome under AUGUSTUS; that of the Iſraelites under SOLOMON.

We muſt, therefore, diſtinguiſh, in each nation, its beginning, its ſtate of greateſt proſperity, and its decline. In this manner we ſhall conſider the Iſraelites, throughout the whole ſpace of time they ſubſiſted as a people, from the calling of Abraham to the final ruin of Jeruſalem. This contains a ſpace of time exceeding two thouſand years, which I ſhall divide into three periods, according to the three very different States of that people. The firſt is that of the PATRIARCHS; the ſecond that of the ISRAELITES; the third that of the JEWS, from the end of the Captivity to the preaching of the Goſpel.

* The approbation given to this work by the great Boſſuet, is dated January 13, 1681.

§ II.

§ II. PART I.

PATRIARCHS,—Their NOBLE BIRTH.

THE PATRIARCHS lived after a noble manner, with great independence and in great plenty: nevertheleſs, their manner of life was plain and laborious. Abraham knew the whole ſeries of his anceſtors, and had not impaired his nobility by an improper match, ſince he married into his own family. He alſo took care to provide a wife of the ſame race for that ſon, on whom the bleſſings, promiſed him by God, were to deſcend: and Iſaac made Jacob obſerve the ſame law.

The long lives of the Fathers afforded them means of beſtowing on their children an excellent education, and of giving them, at an early time of life, a ſolid and ſerious turn of mind. Abraham had lived more than a hundred years with Sem, and might have learnt from him the ſtate of the world before the deluge. He never quitted his father Thare, and was, at leaſt, ſeventy years old when he loſt him. Iſaac was ſeventy-five when Abraham died; nor do we know that he ever went from him. The ſame, nearly, may be ſaid of the other Patriarchs. Living ſo long with their Fathers, they benefited by

by their experience and inventions: they purſued their plans, and confirmed themſelves in their maxims: they became conſtant and ſteadily uniform in their conduct. For it was not an eaſy matter to change what had been well eſtabliſhed by men ſtill living: and the old men maintained their authority, not only over the young people, but alſo over the other old men, who were not ſo far advanced in years as themſelves.

The memory of paſt events might be eaſily preſerved by tradition alone, handed down by old men, who naturally take a pleaſure in relating ſtories of paſt times, and had ſo much leiſure to do it. Thus they ſtood not in any great need of writing: and, in fact, we find no mention made of writing before Moſes.* It ſeems, nevertheleſs, difficult to conceive how the different numbers ſpecified by him, ſhould be preſerved in the memory alone of men: ſuch as the age of all the Patriarchs from Adam; the preciſe dates of the beginning and end of the flood, and the exact dimenſions of the ark.† I do not ſee any neceſſity there is, on this occaſion, to have recourſe to a miracle, or to a revelation. It is more likely that writing was invented before the flood, as well as muſical inſtruments,‡ which were not of ſuch neceſſity. But although Moſes might learn, by natural means, moſt of the facts

* If Job was prior to Moſes, as is thought by the learned, writing alſo muſt have been prior to him, as it is mentioned by Job xix. 23.

† Gen. v.—vii. 11.—viii. 13.—vi. 15, &c.

‡ Ibid. iv. 21.

he committed to writing, we believe, nevertheleſs, that he was guided by the Holy Ghoſt to write thoſe particular facts rather than others, and to expreſs them in proper words.

Moreover the Patriarchs took care to preſerve the memory of remarkable events by building altars, erecting pillars of ſtone, and other laſting monuments. Thus Abraham built altars in the different places, where God had appeared to him.* Jacob conſecrated the ſtone, which had ſerved him for a pillow, during the myſterious dream of the ladder;† and called *Galaad* the heap of ſtones, which was a monument of his covenant with Laban.‡ Of this nature was alſo the ſepulchre of Rachel;‖ the well called *Berſabee*,§ and all the other wells mentioned in the hiſtory of Iſaac. They ſometimes contented themſelves with giving new names to places.—The Greeks and Romans have related the fame of their Heroes, the moſt ancient of whom were nearly contemporaries with the Patriarchs. All Greece was full of their monuments, and Eneas alone had left ſome in all the places of Greece, Sicily and Italy, through which he had paſſed.¶

The very names alſo of the Patriarchs were a kind of monument ſtill more ſimple and familiar. They ſignified what was any way ſingular in their birth, or ſome favour

* Gen. xii. 7.—xiii. 18. † Ibid. xxviii. 18.
‡ Ibid. xxxi. 48. ‖ Ibid. xxxv. 20.
§ Ib. xxvi. 18. 33. ¶ V. Pauſan. paſſim. Dion. Halic.

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they had received from God. They ſerved for an epitome of hiſtory, as they took care to explain to their children the reaſon for giving them thoſe particular names; and they could not even pronounce them without refreſhing the memory with reſpect to the occaſion on which they received them.—This care of Poſterity and this forecaſt for futurity indicate great and noble ſouls.

The Patriarchs enjoyed the moſt perfect independence; and their family was a ſmall ſtate, of which the Father was, as it were, the King. For what did Abraham want of what conſtitutes a ſovereign Prince, except a few empty titles and troubleſome ceremonies? He was not a ſubject of any one: Kings made alliances with him: he made peace and war when he pleaſed. Princes ſought the alliance of Iſaac:* and Iſmael, Jacob and Eſau maintained themſelves in the ſame ſtate of independence. We muſt not, therefore, be impoſed on by words, nor look upon Abraham as inferior to Amraphel, or Abimelech, becauſe the ſcripture does not call him KING, as it does the other two.† He was undoubtedly equal to any one of the four Kings, whom he defeated with his own menial ſervants, and the aſſiſtance of his three Allies. The greateſt difference between them was, that he did not, like them, ſhut himſelf up in walled towns, and his whole ſtate followed him, wherever he pleaſed to encamp. All the moſt credible hiſtories ſhew us only very ſmall Kingdoms

* Gen. xxvi. 26. 28. † Ibid. xiv. 8. 16.

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in thoſe times, even in the Eaſt; and in other countries we find them very ſmall a long time after.

§III. Their Wealth and Occupations.

THE Wealth of the Patriarchs conſiſted chiefly in cattle. Abraham muſt have had a large ſtock, when he was forced to ſeparate from his nephew Lot, becauſe the country could not contain both their flocks together.* Jacob had a great number, when he returned from Meſopotamia; ſince the preſent he made to his brother Eſau, conſiſted of five hundred head of cattle, of different ſorts:† and we ſee in that enumeration what kinds of cattle they fed. They are goats, ſheep, camels, black-cattle and aſſes: there are neither horſes, nor ſwine among them. It was this large number of cattle that made wells and ciſterns ſo valuable in a country, which has no other river beſides the Jordan, and where it rains but ſeldom.

They had alſo ſlaves: and Abraham muſt have had a great many, when he could arm three hundred and eighteen men out of thoſe, who had been born in his houſe, and whom he had trained to arms.‡ He muſt have had, in proportion, a great many children, old men, women and purchaſed ſlaves. At his return from Egypt, it is ſaid, he was rich in gold and ſilver:§ The bracelets and ear-rings, which his ſervant Eliezer pre-

* Gen. xiii. 6. † Ibid. xxxii. 13.—15.
‡ Ibid. xiv. 14. § Ibid. xiii. 2

ſented,

ſented, in his maſter's name, to Rebecca, weighed ſix ounces of gold;* and the purchaſe of his burying-place ſhews that money was then in uſe.† They had alſo perfumes and coſtly garments, as is ſeen by thoſe of Eſau, which Jacob put on, to receive his Father's bleſſing.‡

With all theſe riches they were extremely laborious. They lived conſtantly in the fields, lodged under tents, and frequently changed the place of their abode, for the convenience of paſturage: and conſequently were often buſied in pitching and ſtriking their tents; and frequently upon a march, as they could make but ſhort day's journies with ſo large a train. Not but that they could build houſes, as well as the other inhabitants of the ſame country; yet they gave the preference to that way of life. It is indiſputably the moſt ancient, ſince it is much eaſier to pitch tents, than to build houſes; and it has always been conſidered as the moſt perfect, in as much as it attaches men leſs to the earth. It likewiſe expreſſed better the ſtate of the Patriarchs, who dwelt in that land only as travellers or ſojourners, waiting for the promiſes of God, which were not to be fulfilled till after their deaths.§ The firſt towns mentioned in ſcripture were built by wicked men, by Cain and Nimrod.‖ They were the firſt who ſhut themſelves

* Gen. xxiv. 22. † Ibid. xxiii. 16. ‡ Ibid. xxvii. 15.
§ Heb. xi. 9. 13.
‖ Gen. iv. 17.—Ibid. x. 10.—The learned Author follows the torrent of Interpreters, who uſe Nimrod very ſeverely, without any juſt grounds. The ſcripture men-

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themſelves up in ſtrong holds, to eſcape the puniſhment due to their crimes, and to commit freſh ones with impunity. Good men lived in the open air, fearleſs of danger.

The chief occupation of the Patriarchs was the care of their flocks. This is ſeen throughout their whole hiſtory, and in the expreſs declaration of the children of Jacob to the King of Egypt.* However innocent an employment Agriculture may be, a paſtoral life is the more perfect: the former was the lot of Cain, the latter that of Abel†. There is ſomething more ſimple and noble in it: it is leſs toilſome, it attaches leſs to the earth, and is, at the ſame time, more profitable. Old Cato preferred the feeding of cattle, though in leſs numbers, to the tilling of the ground: which latter, however, he preferred to every other means of growing rich.‡

The juſt reproaches which Jacob uttered againſt Laban, ſhew that the Patriarchs were in earneſt at their work, and did not ſpare themſelves. *Day and night was I parched with heat and with froſt: and ſleep departed from mine eyes: And in this manner have I ſerved thee in thy houſe twenty years.*§ We may

tions him no way to his diſadvantage, when it ſays, he was *a mighty hunter before the Lord*, or a hunter whoſe enterpriſes were bleſſed by God. The ſucceſs of his chaces, uſeful to the whole country, procured him the confidence of the inhabitants near Babel; and being often at their head, he began to form a ſmall kingdom, which without reaſon, was confounded with the beginning of the Aſſyrian power. *Pluch's Hiſt. of the Heavens, Vol. I.* § 18.

* Gen. xlvii. 3. † Ibid. iv. 2.

‡ De re ruſt. in init. § Gen. xxxi. 40, 41.

judge of the labour of the men by that of the young women. Rebecca came a conſiderable way to draw water, and loaded her ſhoulders with it home;* and Rachel led out herſelf her Father's flocks to paſture.† Neither their noble birth, nor the beauty of their perſons rendered them more delicate. This primitive ſimplicity of manners was preſerved for a long time among the Greeks, whoſe politeneſs and good breeding we ſo much admire. Homer every where furniſhes us with inſtances of it, and all Paſtoral Poetry is grounded upon it. In fact, more than fifteen hundred years after the Patriarchs, perſons of rank in Syria, Greece and Italy employed themſelves in feeding cattle, and, in the leiſure this kind of life afforded, and that cheerfulneſs of temper, which thoſe beautiful countries inſpired, compoſed ſome very natural and pleaſing ſmall pieces of poetry.

§. IV. Their FRUGAL LIFE.

THE Patriarchs were no way nice with regard to their food, and the other neceſſaries of life. The pottage of lentils, which Jacob had gotten ready for himſelf, and which were ſo tempting to Eſau,‡ may enable us to judge of their ordinary diet: but we ſee an inſtance of a magnificent entertainment, in that which Abraham prepared for

* Gen. xxiv. 15. † Ibid. xxix. 9.
‡ Ibid. xxv. 30.

the

the three angels. He ſet before them a calf, new bread, but baked in the embers, butter and milk.* It appears alſo that they had ſome ſort of ragouts or made diſhes, by that which Rebecca prepared for Iſaac;† but his great age might excuſe this piece of delicacy. The ragout was made of two kids: and Abraham ſet before the angels a whole calf, with three meaſures of meal made into bread. Theſe three meaſures came to more than two of our buſhels, and weighed near fifty-ſix pounds of our weight. Hence it may be inferred that they were great eaters: but then they uſed a great deal of exerciſe, and were perhaps of a larger ſtature, as well as of a greater longevity. The Greeks believed men to have been bigger in the Heroic times, and Homer makes them great eaters. When Eumæus entertains Ulyſſes, he dreſſes a large ſwine, five years old, for five people.‡

The Heroes of Homer wait on themſelves for the ordinary neceſſaries of life; and we ſee the Patriarchs do the ſame. Abraham, who had ſo many ſervants, and who was then near a hundred years old, brings himſelf the water to waſh the feet of his divine gueſts; goes to haſten his wife to make the bread; goes himſelf to chooſe the meat, and returns to wait upon them ſtanding.§ I grant he might be animated on this occaſion, by his zeal for exerciſing hoſpitality: but all the reſt of their lives correſponded with this

* Gen. xviii. 6. 8. † Ibid. xxvii. 9.
‡ Odyſſ. 14. § Gen. xviii. 4. 8.

inſtance. Their ſervants aſſiſted them in their labour, but did not exempt them from labouring. And, indeed, what could oblige Jacob, when he went into Meſopotamia, to go alone and on foot, with a ſtaff in his hand, a journey of above ſix hundred miles (for ſo far it was, at leaſt, from Berſabee to Haran); what, I ſay could oblige him to this, but his commendable ſimplicity of manners, and his love of labour? Thus he ſleeps wherever night overtakes him; and puts a ſtone under his head for a pillow.* Thus alſo, though he was tenderly fond of Joſeph, he ſends him alone from Hebron to Sichem, which was a long day's journey, to ſeek his brethren; and Joſeph not finding them there, goes on, another day's Journey, as far as Dothain: and this when he was only ſixteen years of age.†

It was, without doubt, this laborious and plain way of life, which made them live to ſo great an age, and die ſo eaſily. Abraham and Iſaac lived each of them near two hundred years. The other Patriarchs, whoſe ages we know, exceeded a hundred, at leaſt; and there is no mention of any ſickneſs they had during ſo long a life. *Decaying, he died in a good old age, and full of days*,‡ is the manner in which the ſcripture deſcribes their death. The firſt time Phyſicians are mentioned, is when Joſeph orders *his ſervants, the Phyſicians*, to embalm his father's body§ This was in Egypt, and ſeveral have attribu-

* Gen. xxviii. 10. 11. † Ibid. xxxvii. 14. 17.
‡ Ibid. xxx. 8. &c. § Ibid. l. 2.

ted

ted to the Egyptians the diſcovery of medicine.

I admire no leſs the moderation of the Patriarchs with reſpect to wives, when I conſider that polygamy was allowed them, and the deſire they had of a numerous progeny. Abraham, whom God had promiſed to make the Father of an innumerable people, though his wife was barren, never thought of taking another,* but had determined to leave his effects to his principal ſervant.† Nor did he take a ſecond at laſt, but from the hand of his wife, when he was fourſcore and ſix years old‡. Nor can it be ſaid, that he was ſtill young in proportion to his length of life, which was a hundred and ſeventy-five years; ſince thirteen years after this, he and Sara, who was ten years younger, are called *old*; and laughed, as at ſomething incredible, when God promiſed them a ſon§. Abraham, notwithſtanding his great age, and his wiſh to ſee the children of Iſaac, did not marry him until he was forty years of age‖: and, although Rebecca continued barren for the ſpace of twenty years, and only had two children at one birth, Iſaac had never any other wife.

It is true, Jacob had two wives and two concubines at the ſame time: but it is proper to ſee how this happened. He lives with his father, until he is ſeventy-ſeven years of age, waiting for that important bleſſing, which

* Aug. Civ. Dei. lib. 16. c. 25. † Gen. xv. 2.
‡ Ibid. xvi. 2. § Ibid. xviii. 11. ‖ Ibid. xxv. 20.

was his due by the promiſe of God, and the ceſſion of his brother. At this age he thinks of marrying. He deſires to have Rachel, but does not obtain her, until after ſeven years ſervice. He marries then, at laſt, when he was fourſcore and four years of age. Lia is impoſed upon him, contrary to his inclination. He takes her, not to abandon her to diſhonour: but as there was no law which prohibited his having two wives at once, or marrying two ſiſters, he takes her likewiſe to whom he had firſt promiſed marriage. As ſhe was barren, ſhe gives her huſband a ſlave, that ſhe might have children by her.* This was a kind of adoption practiſed in thoſe times: and her ſiſter did the ſame, in order to increaſe the family. From all which St Auguſtine draws this concluſion: "We do not read that Ja-"cob deſired more wives than one, or that "he made uſe of more any otherwiſe, than "ſtrictly obſerving the laws of conjugal fi-"delity."† We muſt not, therefore, think that he had any other wives before; for why ſhould mention be made only of the laſt?

I do not, however, pretend to juſtify all the Patriarchs in this point: the hiſtory of Juda and of his ſons affords but too many inſtances of a contrary conduct.‡ I only wanted to ſhew that we cannot accuſe of incontinency thoſe whom the ſcripture ranks among holy men: for, after all, mankind

* Gen. xxx. 3. † Aug. 18. Civ. 38. ‡ Gen. xxxviii.

was

was but too much corrupted even at that time.

Such, in general, was the firſt ſtate of the people of God. A perfect liberty and independence, without any other form of government, but that of a Father, who was an abſolute Monarch in his own family: a life quite natural and eaſy, with the greateſt plenty of whatever was neceſſary, and greateſt contempt for every ſuperfluity: a life ſpent in honourable labour, attended with care and induſtry; but free from anxiety and ambition. Let us now come to the ſecond ſtate of this people, which is called that of the Iſraelites, from their departure out of Egypt to the Captivity of Babylon. It laſted above the ſpace of nine hundred years, and the greateſt part of the ſacred writings relates thereto.

§ V. Part II.

The ISRAELITES.

Their Noble Birth.

ALTHOUGH the people were become already very numerous, they were ſtill called *the Children of Iſrael*, as being yet but one family. In like manner it was an uſual way of ſpeaking to ſay, *The Children of Edom*, *The Children of Moab*, and ſo of the reſt. And, in fact, all theſe nations were as yet unmixed with any others: each knew its origin, and gloried in retaining the name of

of its firſt Anceſtor.* Hence probably the word *Child* among the ancients ſignified a nation, or a particular claſs of people. Homer often uſes this expreſſion: The *Children* or *Sons of the Greeks;* the *Children* or *Sons of the Trojans.* The Greeks alſo uſed the phraſe of the *Children of the Phyſicians, and of the Grammarians,* to expreſs Phyſicians and Grammarians. Among the Hebrews the *Children of the Eaſt,* are the Orientals; the *Children of Belial* are the wicked; the *Children of men* or *of Adam,* are mankind. And in the Goſpel we often meet with, the *Children of this world,* of *darkneſs,* and *of light;* and even the *Children of the Bridegroom,* for thoſe who accompany him at his marriage.

The Iſraelites were divided into twelve tribes: there were likewiſe twelve tribes of the Iſhmaelites,† and twelve tribes of the Perſians.‡ The whole of the people of Athens, at firſt, conſiſted of four tribes; they were afterwards divided into ten, to which were given the names of the ten Heroes, who for this reaſon were called *Eponymi,* and whoſe ſtatues were in the great ſquare.§ The Roman people were likewiſe, at firſt, diſtributed into three or four tribes, and theſe increaſed afterwards to thirty-five, the names of which are ſtill known. But theſe tribes of Athens and Rome were compoſed of different families collected together, to keep

* So do the Highlanders, and Iriſh, and others to this day; as the MacDonalds, the O'Connors, &c.

† Gen. xxv. 16. ‡ Xenoph. Cyrop.

§ Demoſt. in Timocr. in Lept. & ib. Ulp.

up

up an order in their aſſemblies and ſuffrages: whereas thoſe of the Iſraelites were naturally diſtinct, and were only twelve large families, deſcended from twelve brothers. They preſerved their genealogies with the utmoſt care, and knew the whole ſeries of their Anceſtors up to the Patriarch of their tribe, from whom it was eaſy to go up to the firſt man. Thus they were truly *Brethren*, that is to ſay, Relations, according to the uſual manner of ſpeaking among the Orientals; and truly *Noble*, if ever there was ſuch a thing as true Nobility on the face of the earth.

They had preſerved the purity of their race, by being careful, like their Fathers, not to intermarry with the nations accurſed by God, deſcended from Chanaan: for I do not find that the Patriarchs avoided an alliance with any other nations; and it is only with the former that marriages are expreſsly forbidden by the law.* Their families were fixed to a certain ſpot, and certain portions of land were allotted to each family by the ſame law, where, of neceſſity, they remained during the nine hundred years we are ſpeaking of. Now, I believe, we ſhould look upon a family very noble indeed, that could ſhew ſo long a ſucceſſion of generations without ever marrying below themſelves, or ever changing the place of their abode:—Few great Lords in Europe can ſhew ſo much.

What deceives us, is that we do not find

* Exod. xxxiv. 16.—Deut. vii. 3.

among

among the Iſraelites any titles like thoſe of our Nobility. Every one was plainly called by his own name alone: but their names were expreſſive of great things, like thoſe of the Patriarchs. The name of God entered into the compoſition of moſt of them, and they thereby became, as it were, a ſhort prayer. Elias or Eliah, and Joel are made up of two names of God joined in a different manner. Joſaphat and Sepharia expreſs the judgment of God: Joſedec and Sedecias, the juſtice of God: Johanan, or John the Son of Hananias, his mercy. Nathaniel, Elnathan, Jonathan and Nathanias, all four ſignify *Given by God*, or the *gift of God*. Sometimes the name of God was not expreſſed but underſtood only, as in Nathan, David, Obed, Oza, Eſra, or Eſdras. This appears from the names of Eliezer, Oziel, Abdias, where it is expreſſed. Some of theſe names were myſterious and prophetic, as that of Joſue, or Jeſus: and thoſe which Oſee and Iſaias gave their children by the appointment of God.* The other names ſhew the piety and religion of the Fathers, of which we ſee inſtances in the names of the brethren of David and of his children.†

Such are the names, which, from our ignorance of the Hebrew tongue, appear to us ſo barbarous. But are they not full as good as thoſe taken from country-ſeats, or caſtles, countries, towns, and villages, with which our Nobility plume themſelves. The

* Oſee i. 4.—Iſ. viii. 3. † 1 Chron. ii. 13. iii. 1.

names

names of the Greeks, the ſound of which is more pleaſing to our ears, are of the ſame nature. Several are compounded of the names of their Gods; as Diodorus, Diogenes, Hermodorus, Hephœſtion, Athenais, Arthemiſia: but more of them are taken from their fondneſs for their exerciſes, eſpecially that of riding; as Philip, Damaſippus, or Hippodamus, Hegeſippus, Hippomedon.

The Father's name was often joined to that of the Son, either for diſtinction's ſake, or as an honourable addition, to ſhew that the Father was a man of renown: and perhaps Solomon alluded to this cuſtom, when he ſaid: *The glory of the children are their Fathers.** We ſee in Homer † that the Greeks, in like manner, took the Father's name as a mark of honour. Sometimes the mother's name was given by way of a ſurname, as when the Father had ſeveral wives, or when the mother was of more illuſtrious birth. Thus Jaob and his brethren are always called the ſons of Sarvia, who was David's ſiſter. If the Father's name was not a ſufficient diſtinction, the name of the Grandfather was added to it, as Godolias the ſon of Ahicam, the ſon of Saphan.§ And this is the reaſon of thoſe ſtrings of names, which appear to us ſo tedious; for they ſometimes went up to the great Grandfather and higher.‖ Sometimes the ſurname was taken

* Prov. xvii. 6. † Ill. 10. 68.

‡ 1 Chron. ii. 16. § Jer. xxxix. 14.

‖ The ſame is ſtill found among the Welſh, as ap Owen, ap Meredith, ap Tudor, &c.

from

from the head of a particular branch, from a town, country or nation, if they were originally ſtrangers, as Urias the Hethite, and Ornam the Jebuſite.

The Greeks had no other ſurnames, but ſuch as they took from their Fathers or their country. The Romans had family names, to which they only added the marks of ſome great public employment, or famous victory: but in all public deeds they conſtantly expreſſed the Father's name. The ſame is ſtill done by ſeveral nations in Europe, and a great part of our ſurnames are derived from the Chriſten-name of the Fathers, which continued to their children. As to the titles taken from Lordſhips or Manors, they are not of much above ſeven hundred years ſtanding, any more than the Lordſhips themſelves. We ought not, therefore, to be any more ſurpriſed at finding in the ſcripture *David the ſon of Iſai*, and *Solomon the ſon of David*, than we are in finding in Greek Authors, *Alexander the ſon of Philip*, or *Ptolomy the ſon of Lagus*.

The chief diſtinction of birth among the Iſraelites was that of the Levites and Prieſts. The whole tribe of Levi was conſecrated to God, and had no other allotment than the tithes and firſt-fruits, which they received from the other tribes. Of all the Levites, only the deſcendants of Aaron were the Prieſts; the reſt of the tribe, called ſimply *Levites*, were employed in the other functions of Religion, ſuch as ſinging of Pſalms, guarding the Tabernacle or Temple

ple, and inſtructing the people. Two other tribes were alſo ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed. The moſt illuſtrious, all along, was that of Juda, as well as the moſt numerous, from whence their Kings, and even the Meſſias himſelf was to come, according to the prophecy of Jacob.* That of Ephraim held the ſecond place on Joſeph's account. In every tribe the eldeſt branch, and the Chiefs of each family were held in conſideration; and this was the reaſon of Saul's ſurpriſe at the honours ſhewn him by Samuel, when he

C

ſaid:

* Gen. xlix. 10.—This prophecy of Jacob has been ſtrangely obſcured by miſtaking the *ſceptre*, therein mentioned, for a royal ſceptre. The word itſelf has an indeterminate ſignificaton. In the hand of an old man or a traveller it is a ſtaff; in the hand of an angry maſter, an inſtrument of correction; in the hand of a ſhepherd, a crook; in the hand of a Chief, a ſtaff of honour; in the hand of a King, a ſceptre, or mark of ſovereign power. The quality therefore of this ſceptre is to be determined by the quality of the perſon who bears it. This perſon is named in the other part of the verſe, a *Chief*, a head of a family, one who has authority over, preſides in the the council of the tribe, and keeps an account of all who are ſubordinate to him. The prophecy points out the deſtiny of every particular tribe, as is evident to the reader. We muſt not, therefore, generalize the prophecy made to Juda, as if it regarded all the other tribes. The Chief, therefore, deſcended from Juda, who is to bear the ſceptre in this tribe to the coming of the Meſſias, cannot be taken for a common head of the tribes; much leſs for a head not deſcended from Juda, but from Levi, for inſtance, the Aſſamoneans. To explain thus the prophecy is to ſtrip it of what characterizes it, and, by offering it violence, to annihilate it. Every tribe therefore had its Chief, or *Mehokek*; every Chief had his ſceptre or ſtaff of honour. The other tribes may be diſperſed, or almoſt forgotten and loſt, as were the ten tribes, which compoſed the kingdom of Iſrael. But to the Tribe of Juda alone is a promiſe made of its continuance under its

ſaid: *Am not I of the leaſt Tribe of Iſrael? And my kindred the laſt among the families of the tribe of Benjamin?**

Age likewiſe made a great diſtinction, and the name of *Elder* or *Old-man*, in ſcripture, is commonly a mark of dignity. And indeed, there was nothing but age and experience that could make any diſtinction among men equal in birth, very near equal in riches, educated in the ſame manner, and employed in the ſame labours.

its own Chiefs, with its genealogies in good order, unto the coming of the Meſſias, and until *the nations obey him*: ſo that by this means, his birth may be aſcertained, and it may be notorious that he was the ſon of David, of Juda, of Iſaac, of Abraham. The event perfectly anſwered the prophecy, and the fulfilling of it is as plain as the prophecy itſelf. As ſoon as the nations came in unto the Son of Mary, and the offspring of Juda had ſhewn the true God, the Tribe of Juda, from that moment, had fulfilled its deſtination. Immediately after the converſion of the Gentiles to Chriſtianity, the Tribe of Juda is driven out of the promiſed land, and every where diſperſed like the other tribes. The remains of this, with thoſe of the other tribes, ſhall one day acknowledge him, whom their Fathers rejected. At preſent they are without Sceptre, Chiefs or Regiſters, and altogether incapable of juſtifying the deſcent of the Meſſias they vainly expect; or of proving, by authentic records, that he is the Son of David, of Jacob, and of Abraham, as the Evangeliſts have done with regard to Jeſus the Son of Mary. *See Spectacle de la Nature*, Vol. 8.

§ VI.

* 1 Kings ix. 21.

§ VI. Part II.

Their Occupations,—Agriculture.

AMONGST the Iſraelites I do not find any diſtinct profeſſions. From the Chief of the tribe of Juda to the youngeſt ſon of the tribe of Benjamin, all were huſbandmen and herdſmen, driving their own ploughs themſelves, and keeping their own flocks. The old man of Gabaa that lodged the Levite, whoſe wife was raviſhed, was coming home in the evening from his work, when he invited him to come into his houſe.* Gedeon was thraſhing his own corn himſelf, when an angel told him that he ſhould deliver the people.† Ruth gained the favour of Booz, while gleaning at his harveſt.‡ When Saul received the news of the danger the town of Jabes-Galaad was in, he was driving home a pair of oxen, though then actually King.§ Every body knows that David was keeping ſheep, when Samuel ſent for him to anoint him King;‖ and that he returned to his flocks, after he had been ſent for to play on the harp before Saul.¶ After he was King, his ſons made a great feaſt at the ſhearing of their ſheep.** Eliſeus was called to propheſy, when he was driving one of his Father's twelve ploughs;†† and

* Jud. xix, 16. † Ibid. vi. 11. ‡ Ruth ii. 2.
§ 1 Kings xi. 5. ‖ Ibid. xvi. 11. ¶ Ibid. xvii. 15
** 2 Kings xiii. 23. †† 3 Kings xix. 19.

the child whom he reſtored to life, was with his father at the harveſt, when he was taken ill:* and Judith's huſband, although very rich, got the illneſs of which he died, on a like occaſion.† The ſcripture is full of ſuch inſtances.

This, without doubt, is what ſhocks moſt thoſe, who are unacquainted with antiquity, and eſteem only our own manners and cuſtoms. When one ſpeaks to them of huſbandmen and ſhepherds, they figure to themſelves a parcel of illiterate clowns, leading a laborious and ſorrowful life in poverty and contempt, without ſpirits, without parts or education. They do not conſider that what renders our peaſants, in general, ſo miſerable, is that they are, as it were, the ſervants of all the reſt of mankind, toiling not only for their own ſubſiſtence, but to ſupply with the neceſſaries of life, thoſe whom we look upon as in a higher ſphere of life. For it is the Peaſant that feeds the Citizen, the Magiſtrate, the Officers of the Revenue, the Gentleman and the Eccleſiaſtic: and whatever art is uſed to turn money into articles of trade, or articles of trade into money, every thing muſt, at laſt, come back again to the fruits of the earth, and the animals it feeds. Nevertheleſs, when we form a compariſon between theſe different ſtates and ranks of life, we give the laſt place to the huſbandman; and many people hold in greater eſteem an overgrown, uſeleſs inhabitant of a town, without ſtrength of bo-

* 4 Kings iv. 18. † Judith viii. 3.

dy,

dy, without induſtry and void of all merit, becauſe, as he has more money, he enjoys more of the conveniences and pleaſures of life.

But, if we repreſent to ourſelves a country, where the difference of conditions was not ſo great; where to live like a Gentleman, was not to live without doing any thing, but carefully to preſerve one's liberty: that is to ſay, to be ſubject only to the laws and the public authority; to live upon one's own, and independent, and to be content with a little, rather than do any thing baſe or mean in order to grow rich: a country where idleneſs, effeminacy, and ignorance of things neceſſary for life, were held in contempt; and where pleaſure was leſs conſidered than health and ſtrength of body: in ſuch a country as that, it would be far more honourable to till the ground, or keep a flock, than to ſpend one's life in play and taking the air. Now we need not have recourſe to Plato's imaginary republic to find men in ſuch a ſtate: it was thus the greateſt part of mankind lived for near four thouſand years.

To begin with what we are beſt acquainted with, ſuch were the maxims of the Greeks and Romans. We ſee every where in Homer, Kings and Princes living on the produce of their lands and flocks, and working with their own hands. Heſiod wrote a poem expreſsly to recommend huſbandry, as the only honeſt means of gaining a livelihood and acquiring a fortune: and he blames

his brother, to whom he dedicates his Poem, for endeavouring to live at the expence of others, by pleading at the bar and following the law. This employment, which amongſt us is that of ſo many, he treats as downright idleneſs. We ſee by the Oeconomics of Xenophon, that the Greeks had loſt nothing of their eſteem for Agriculture, at the time they had arrived at the higheſt pitch of politeneſs.

We are not therefore to impute to ignorance and a want of learning the attachment the ancient Romans had to the management of their rural concerns; it is rather a mark of their good ſenſe. As all men are born with arms and bodies fit for labour, they thought all obliged to make uſe of them, and that they could not employ them better, than in drawing from the earth a certain ſubſiſtence and a guiltleſs wealth. It was not however, avarice that prompted them to this, ſince theſe ſame Romans held gold in contempt, and ſcorned the preſents of ſtrangers. Neither did it proceed from a want of courage or of a martial ſpirit, ſince it was at this very time, that they reduced all Italy to their ſubjection, and acquired that immenſe ſtrength, which they afterwards employed in the conqueſt of the world. On the contrary, this laborious and frugal country life was the chief cauſe of this great ſtrength, as it rendered their bodies robuſt, hardened them to labour, and accuſtomed them to a ſevere diſcipline. Whoever is acquainted with the life of Cato the Cenſor,

canno

cannot ſuſpect him of meanneſs of ſoul or a want of abilities. Nevertheleſs that great man, who had gone through all the public employments of the Republic, when it was in its greateſt proſperity; who had governed Provinces and commanded armies; a great Orator, a great Lawyer, and a great Stateſman; that great man, I ſay, did not diſdain to commit to writing the different methods of managing lands and vineyards, of building ſtables for different ſorts of cattle, and of making preſſes for wine and oil. And, throughout the whole of his performance, he deſcends to the moſt minute particulars, ſo that one may eaſily ſee, that he was perfect maſter of his ſubject, and that he wrote for uſe, and not for oſtentation.

Let us, therefore, frankly own, that the contempt we have for huſbandry or country-labour, is not grounded on any ſolid reaſon; ſince this employment is perfectly compatible with courage, with all the virtues of war and peace, and even with true politeneſs. But from whence then does this contempt proceed? We muſt diſcover the true ſource of it. It proceeds ſolely from cuſtom, and the ancient manners of our nation. The Franks and the other people of Germany lived in a country covered with woods, where they had neither corn, wine, or any good kinds of fruit. They were therefore obliged to live by hunting, as the ſavages in the northern parts of America do to this day. After they had paſſed the Rhine, and got ſettled in a better country, they were willing

to reap the advantages of Agriculture, of the arts and of trade, but would not apply themſelves to any of them. They left theſe employments to the Romans, whom they had ſubdued, and remained in their ancient ignorance, for which, in proceſs of time, they valued themſelves, and affixed to it an idea of Gentility, which we can yet ſcarce ſhake off.

But, in proportion to their undervaluing huſbandry, they enhanced the merit of hunting, which the ancients held in much leſs eſteem. They reduced it to a ſyſtem, and carried it to the niceſt perfection, ſparing, to that purpoſe, neither pains nor coſt: it became the moſt ordinary occupation of our nobility and gentry. Nevertheleſs, were we to conſider and judge of things, as they are in themſelves, the labour which tends to the cultivation of lands, and the feeding of domeſtic animals, is full as good as that, which has no other end, than the taking of wild beaſts, and that, often, at the expence of cultivated lands. The moderate exerciſe of a perſon, who has a large farm to manage, well ſtocked with cattle, poultry, &c. is full as good, as the violent and unequal exerciſe of a hunter: and oxen and ſheep are, at leaſt, as uſeful in life, as dogs and horſes. Therefore it may well be doubted, if our manners, in this point, be as rational as thoſe of the ancients.

Moreover, the Greeks and Romans were not the only people who held Agriculture in the ſame eſteem the Hebrews did. The Cartha-

Carthaginians, who were originally Phenicians, had made it an important ſtudy, as appears by the twenty-eight books, which Mago had wrote on that ſubject.* The Egyptians honoured it ſo far, as to adore the animals employed therein. The Perſians, in the height of their power, had, in each Province, Intendants, or Overſeers, to take care of the cultivation of the ground: and Cyrus the younger had taken a pleaſure in planting and cultivating a garden with his own hands.† As to the Chaldeans, we cannot doubt of the great attention they paid to Agriculture, if we conſider the fertility of the plains of Babylon, which yielded two or three hundred grains for one. Laſtly, the Hiſtory of China informs us that Agriculture was there alſo held in the higheſt eſteem, in the earlieſt and beſt periods of their hiſtory.—Nothing but the People from the North, becoming maſters every where, has brought a contempt on huſbandry.

Let us, therefore, lay aſide the mean opinion we have formed of it from our infancy. Inſtead of our villages, where we ſee on one hand Gentlemen's ſeats, and country-houſes; and on the other, ſome miſerable cottages; let us repreſent to ourſelves thoſe large farms, which the Romans called *Villas*, and which contained apartments for the Maſter, a yard for the poultry, barns, ſtables, houſes for the ſlaves; and all this in perfect ſymmetry, well built, kept in good repair, and extremely neat. Deſcriptions of them may

* Varro. Præf. † Xenop. Œcon.

be

be ſeen in Varro and Columella. Theſe ſlaves were, for the moſt part, in a happier condition than our country-people. They were well fed and clothed; and had no care to take of their wives and children. The maſters, notwithſtanding their frugal way of life, lived more at their eaſe than our Gentry. You ſee in Xenophon a citizen of Athens, who, taking a morning's-walk over his grounds, and looking after his workmen, at the ſame time contributed to his own health by bodily exerciſe, and increaſed his eſtate by his aſſiduity in improving it; ſo as to be ſufficiently rich to give to his religion, to the ſervice of the ſtate, and to his friends.* Cicero ſpeaks of ſeveral huſbandmen in Sicily, whoſe opulence and magnificence were ſuch, as to have their houſes adorned with coſtly ſtatues, and to be ſerved themſelves in chaſed plate of gold and ſilver.†

Laſtly, it muſt be acknowledged, that, while the greateſt Nobility and the richeſt men of every country were not above this employment, the moſt ancient of all, their life was more happy, becauſe more conformable to nature. They lived longer, and enjoyed better health. Their bodies were fitter for the fatigues of wars and journies, and their minds were more ſerious and ſolid.—Being leſs idle, they were leſs tireſome to themſelves, and ſought not ſo many refinements in their pleaſures. Labour made them reliſh the ſmalleſt diverſions. They thought leſs of evil, and had leſs intereſt in

* Xenoph. Oecon † Lib. 4.

com-

mitting it: as their frugal and plain way of life could not occaſion any immoderate expences or large debts; and conſequently there were fewer law-ſuits, fewer ſales of property, and fewer families were ruined. There were fewer frauds, acts of violence, and other crimes, which a poverty, either real or imaginary, is the occaſion of committing, for want of a will or power to work. The worſt of all is; that the example of the rich and the gentry drags on all others, and is the cauſe, that whoever believes himſelf ever ſo little above the dregs of the common people, is aſhamed to labour, particularly in the huſbandry-way. Hence ſo many efforts to live by knavery: ſo many new contrivances to make money paſs from one purſe to another.—God knows how far innocent, in his ſight, all theſe forced ways of living may be; at leaſt the generality of them are very precarious: whereas the earth will always feed thoſe who till it, if others rob them not of what it gives them.

Wherefore this laborious and country life of the Iſraelites ought to be ſo far from rendering them a contemptible people, that it is a proof of their wiſdom, of their good education, and conſtancy in following the maxims of their Fathers. They knew that man had been originally placed in the terreſtrial paradiſe to work therein;* and that, after his ſin, he had been condemned to a more laborious and ungrateful toil.† They

* Gen. ii. 15. † Ibid. iii. 17.

were

were convinced of these solid truths, so often inculcated in the books of Solomon: *The slothful hand hath wrought poverty.** *He that gathereth in the harvest, is a wise son, but he that snorteth in the summer is the son of confusion.*† *Because of cold the sluggard would not plow: he shall beg therefore in the summer, and it shall not be given him.*‡ *The hand of the industrious getteth riches.*§ *The inheritance gotten hastily in the beginning, in the end shall be without a blessing.*‖ There we see frugal poverty with joy and simplicity preferred to noisy plenty and insolent riches.¶ There we see the inconveniency of the two extremes of want and opulency;** and the wishes of the wise man confined to the necessaries of life.†† He enters even into a detail of œconomical precepts: *Prepare thy works without doors, and diligently till the ground, that afterwards thou mayest build thy house.*‡‡ The maxim of Cato comes to the same: That there is no need of deliberation to plant, but of a great deal to build.

Now in the Book of Proverbs, and throughout the whole scripture, whatever is called *work*, *business*, *riches*, has a reference to husbandry. It always means lands, vineyards, meadows, oxen, sheep. Most of the figurative expressions are drawn from thence. Kings and other chiefs are called *Shepherds*; the people are *Flocks*: and to govern them is to *feed* them. Therefore the

* Prov. x. 4. † Ibid. 5. ‡ Ibid. xx. 4. § Ibid x. 4
‖ Ibid. xx. 21. ¶ Prov. xviii. ** Ibid. xix. 1.
†† Ibid. xxx. 8. ‡‡ Ibid. xxiv. 27.

Israelites

Iſraelites ſought their ſubſiſtence only in the moſt natural wealth, that is to ſay, in lands and cattle; from whence neceſſarily muſt come whatever conſtitutes the riches of men by Manufactures, Trade, yearly Income or Traffic of money.

§ VII. QUALITY of the HOLY LAND, and its FERTILITY.

THE Iſraelites inhabited the country promiſed to the Patriarchs, of which the ſcripture often ſays, that *it flowed with milk and honey*, to expreſs its fertility. This country, which is ſo hot in compariſon of France, is very far in the temperate zone, between the thirty-firſt and thirty-third degree of latitude. It is bounded on the ſouth by large mountains, which intercept the ſcorching winds, from the deſerts of Arabia, and which, like thoſe deſerts, ſtretch out a great way to the Eaſt. The Mediterranean, which bounds it to the Weſt, drawing a little to the Northward, ſends it refreſhing breezes: and Mount Libanus ſeems to have been placed more to the Northward to ſtop the coldeſt winds. It is the Mediterranean ſea, which the ſcripture generally calls the *Great Sea*: for the Hebrews were little acquainted with the Ocean; and they gave the name of *ſea* to lakes and large pieces of water. The inland part of the country is diverſified with mountains, and hills advantageouſly ſituated for vines, fruit-trees,

and the grazing of ſmall cattle: the frequent vallies afford a great many torrents very neceſſary to water a country, that has no other river than the Jordan. There is ſeldom any rain; but what there is, falls, regularly, in ſpring and autumn: and this the ſcripture calls the *Morning* and *Evening rain*, conſidering the year as a day. In ſummer, plentiful dews ſupply the want of rain. There are plains fit for tillage and paſturage; particularly the large plain of Galilee: and this variety of ſoil, in a ſmall compaſs, forms moſt pleaſing landſcapes, eſpecially when a country is well inhabited and cultivated.

For we muſt not form a judgment of what the holy land formerly was from its preſent condition. From the times of the Cruſades, until it fell into the hands of the Turks, it was laid waſte by continual wars: Hence it is now almoſt a deſert. Nothing is ſeen but pitiful villages, old ruins, lands uncultivated and deſerted, but full of large weeds, which ſhew the natural fertility of the ſoil. The Turks neglect it, as they do all their other provinces; and ſeveral families of Beduin Arabs, for a long time, have been uſed to encamp there at pleaſure, and plunder with impunity. Wherefore to know what the country formerly was, we muſt conſult the ancient writers, ſuch as Joſephus,* and eſpecially the holy ſcriptures. See the account given by the ſpies of Moſes

* 3 bell. c. 2. and 2 bell. c. 4.

and the prodigious bunch of grapes, which they brought from thence:* and not to be ſurpriſed thereat, compare our grapes in France with thoſe in Italy, which is a cold country in compariſon of Paleſtine. It is the ſame with reſpect to moſt of our other fruits. Their names ſtill ſhew that they originally came from Aſia and Africa; but they have not preſerved, together with their name, either their natural ſize or flavour.

The Iſraelites reaped great crops of wheat and barley; and the beſt corn is reckoned as a principal branch of their trade to Tyre.† They had alſo great plenty of oil and honey:‡ and the mountains of Juda and Ephraim were very extenſive vineyards. In the neighbourhood of Jericho there were Palm-trees which brought in a large yearly revenue:§ and it was the only place in the world, where the true Balm was to be found.‖

The natural fertility of the country, and the care they took in cultivating it, will help us to conceive how, being ſo ſmall, it could ſupply nouriſhment for ſuch a number of inhabitants: for one muſt have faith, at firſt, to believe all the ſcripture ſays on this head.

When the people firſt entered this country, they were upwards of ſix hundred thouſand men bearing arms, from twenty years old to ſixty.¶ In the war of Gabaa, the tribe of Benjamin alone, which was the

* Numb. xiii. 24. † Ez. xxvii. 17. ‡ Ib. § Joſ. 1 bell. c. 5. ‖ Plin. l. 13. c. 4. ¶ Numb. ii. 32.—xi. 21.

ſmalleſt of all the tribes, had an army o twenty-five thouſand men ;* and the reſt o the tribes one of four hundred thouſand. Saul led out two hundred and ten thouſan men againſt the Amelecites, when he ex tirpated them ‡ David kept conſtantly o foot twelve bodies of twenty-four thouſan men each, who ſerved by the month ;§ whic made in all two hundred and fourſcore thou ſand men. And in the numbering of th people, which drew on him the wrath o God, they were found to be thirteen hun dred thouſand fighting men.‖ Joſaphat wen beyond that number, in proportion to th extent of his territories. For although h had ſcarce above a third part of David' kingdom, he had ſeveral corps of goo troops under his command, which, in all amounted to eleven hundred and ſixty thou ſand men, beſides the garriſons in his ſtron places.¶

There is nothing incredible in all this we ſee the like inſtances in profane hiſtory The great Thebes, in Egypt, furniſhed, ou of its inhabitants alone, ſeven hundred thou ſand fighting men.** At Rome, in the firſ Cenſus, under Servius Tullius, in the hun dredth and eighty-eighth year from the build ing of the city, there were found fourſcor thouſand citizens capable of bearing arms.†† Nevertheleſs they could only ſubſiſt on th lands that are in the neighbourhood of Rome

* Jud. xx. 15. † Ibid. 17 ‡ 1 Kings xv. 4. § 1 Chron. xxvii. ‖ 2 Kings xv. 4. ¶ 2 Ceron. xvi 14, &c. ** Tac. 2 Ann. †† Liv. 1. c. 24.

Of

of which the greateſt part, at preſent, is barren and uninhabited: for the territories they were maſters of, did not extend above eight or ten leagues.

The increaſe of population was the principal ground-work of the policy of the ancients. *In the multitude of the people*, ſays the wiſe man, *is the dignity of the King: and in the ſmall number of the people is the diſhonour of the Prince.** They relied leſs on cunning, than on effective ſtrength: and inſtead of maintaining ſpies among their neighbours, fomenting diviſions, and gaining a reputation by falſe reports; they laboured to people and cultivate their country, and to make the moſt of it, they poſſibly could; whether it were ſmall or large. They endeavoured to render marriages eaſy, and life convenient; to procure health and plenty; and to draw from their land, whatever it would produce. They inured their citizens to labour, inſpired them with a love of their country, union among themſelves, and ſubmiſſion to the laws. This was what they called *Policy*. Theſe are fine maxims, will ſomebody ſay; but let us return to the particular fact before us: ſhew us how it is poſſible that a country, ſo ſmall as Paleſtine, could feed ſuch a number of men. To ſee how this could be done, we muſt have the patience to calculate, and not diſdain to enter into the moſt minute detail; without which there can be no ſolid proof.

Joſephus† has preſerved us a valuable

* Prov. xiv. 28. † Contr. App. lib. 1.

paſſage of Hecatæus of Abdera, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, and was in the ſervice of the firſt of the Ptolemies. After having mentioned ſeveral remarkable particulars with regard to the manners of the Jews, he adds, that the country they inhabited, contained about three millions of *Arouras* of very good and fertile land. The *Aroura*, according to Euſtathius, was a hundred cubits, that is to ſay, one hundred and fifty feet, which, being ſquared, makes twenty two thouſand five hundred. Now one of our Arpents or Acres, of a hundred perches, contains forty thouſand ſquare feet, counting the perch at only twenty feet. Thus nine of our Arpents make ſixteen Arouras.

I have enquired what is the produce of our beſt lands; and am informed, that every Arpent yields to the amount of one *Muid*, Paris meaſure, or forty buſhels Wincheſter. I have alſo enquired how much was neceſſary for the ſupport of a man; and found that, allowing him two pounds ſix ounces of bread a day, he conſumes three buſhels of wheat each month; that is, thirty-ſix buſhels in a year. But this would not be enough for one of our Iſraelites: we muſt allow him, at leaſt, twice as much: and I find the proof of this in ſcripture. When God ſent them down Manna in the Wilderneſs, he ordered, that every one of them ſhould gather a *Gomer* a day; neither more nor leſs:* and it is often ſaid, that a *Gomer* was what a man could eat in a day.†

* Exod. xvi. 16. † Ibid. xviii. 21.

Now

Now a *Gomer*, reduced to our meaſure, is three pints and a half, or ſomewhat more, and weighs upwards of five pounds and a half. This therefore amounts to about eighty-four buſhels a year: and conſequentiy each Arpent could, at moſt, nouriſh only two men: and the three millions of *Arouras*, making one million, ſix hundred and eighty-ſeven thouſand, five hundred Arpents, would feed three millions, three hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand men.

I know this number is not ſufficient to make out the twelve hundred thouſand fighting men of Joſaphat. He was not maſter of half the country; and though all the Iſraelites bore arms without any diſtinction of rank, or condition of life, there were nevertheleſs great numbers among them unfit for war. We muſt reckon, very near, as many women as men. We muſt likewiſe take into the account many old men, and ſtill more children: and although leſs food, in proportion, was requiſite for them, a great deal was neceſſary for ſo large a number. Moreover the law required that the land ſhould lie fallow every ſeventh year.

But we muſt take notice that the paſſage of Hecatæus relates only to the arable lands of the Jews, and moreover only to the beſt parts thereof: for the whole extent of the land of Iſrael was near fourteen times as much. We cannot give it leſs, according to our Maps, than five degrees ſquare. Now one degree makes two millions, nine hundred and thirty thouſand two hundred and

and fifty-nine ſquare Arpents: and the five degrees make fourteen millions, ſix hundred and fifty-one thouſand, two hundred and ninety-five Arpents. It is evident, therefore, that Hecatæus included only a very ſmall part in his account. He omits what the Samaritans were in poſſeſſion of in his time; as likewiſe the lakes, deſerts, barren lands, vineyards, plantations, paſture-ground, of which their own numerous herds required a great deal; and yet they had cattle from other places. The King of Moab paid Achab, King of Iſrael, a tribute of a hundred thouſand lambs, and as many rams:* and other Arabians brought Joſaphat ſeven thouſand ſeven hundred rams, and as many he-goats.

This quantity of cattle was a great help to their ſubſiſtence, not only by the fleſh thereof, but alſo by the milk; add to this, that the Iſraelites lived in a plain frugal manner, and that all the good land they had, was carefully cultivated; for they had few woods; nor had they any parks for beaſts of chaſe; no avenues, no flower-gardens. We ſee by the Song of Solomon, that their gardens were full of fruit-trees and aromatic plants. We need be at leſs trouble to find room to lodge them than to find them food: ſince not only half an Arpent of land, but even a quarter is more than ſufficient to lodge conveniently not only one man, but a whole family.

* 2 Chron. xvii. 11.

§ VI

§ VIII.—Wealth of the Israelites.

EACH Iſraelite, therefore, had his field to till, and the very ſame, that had fallen to the lot of his anceſtors in the time of Joſue. They could not change the place of their abode; nor could they ruin or enrich themſelves beyond bounds. The law of the Jubilee had provided againſt that, by revoking all alienations every fiftieth year, and forbidding the exaction of debts, not only this forty-ninth year, but every Sabbatic year:* for as they gathered in nothing from the earth in theſe years, it was but juſt, that a ſtop, at leaſt, ſhould be put to all ſuits for debt, at the ſame time. Now this difficulty of recovering debts, made it alſo more difficult to borrow; and conſequently rendered the occaſions of impoveriſhing themſelves leſs frequent: and this indeed was the intent of the law. On the other hand, the impoſſibility of making durable acquiſitions, cut off ambition and diſquietude; ſo that every one contented himſelf with the lot of his anceſtors, and took a pleaſure in improving it to the utmoſt, knowing that it would never go out of his family.

This attachment to their patrimony was even a duty of Religion, as being founded on the law of God: and from hence proceeded the generous oppoſition of Naboth,

* Lev. xxv. 10, 11, &c.—Joſ. Ant. 3. c. 10.

when

when King Achab would have perſuaded him to ſell the inheritance of his anceſtors.* And, in fact, the law declares them to be no more than the Uſufructuaries of their lands, or rather the Tenants of God, who alone was the true Proprietor.† They had no other rents to pay, but the Tithes and Firſt-fruits, as God had ordered: and Samuel reckons the taxes on corn and wine among the encroachments of Kings, with which he threatened the people.‡ All the Iſraelites, therefore, were nearly equal in wealth, as they were in nobility of birth: and, if the increaſe of family obliged them to divide their lands into more portions, this diminution was to be compenſated by induſtry and labour in cultivating their lands with greater care, and in feeding more cattle in the deſerts and commons.

Their cattle and other moveables conſtituted the chief inequality of wealth amongſt them. They fed the ſame kinds of animals as the Patriarchs had done before them, and always more females than males; otherwiſe theſe latter would have been troubleſome, as the Law forbids caſtrating them.§ They had ho horſes; nor indeed are they of any great uſe in mountainous countries. When their Kings choſe to make uſe of any, they ſent to Egypt for them. Even the rich commonly rode on aſſes. To give us a great idea of Jair, one of the twelve judges who governed the peo-

* 3 Kings xxi. 3. † Lev. xxv. 23.
‡ 1 Kings viii. 15. § Lev. xxii. 24.

ple,

ple, the Scripture ſays, that he had thirty ſons mounted on thirty aſs-colts, and Princes of thirty cities.* It is related of Abdon, another of the Judges, that he had forty ſons, and thirty grand-ſons, mounted on ſeventy aſs-colts.† And, in the Song of Debbora, the Princes of Iſrael are deſcribed as mounted on ſleek and ſhining aſſes.‡

It does not appear that they had many ſlaves; neither did they ſtand in need of them, being themſelves ſo laborious a people and ſo numerous in ſuch a ſmall country. They choſe rather to make their children work, as they had them to maintain, and were ſerved better by them. The Romans found a great inconvenience, at laſt, from that prodigious number of ſlaves from all countries, whom luxury and effeminacy brought amongſt them. It was one chief cauſe of the ruin of the Empire.

Ready money muſt not have been very common amongſt the Iſraelites, as it could not be of any great uſe in a country, where immoveables could ſcarce ever be alienated, or debts contracted; and where there was little trade. Uſury was forbid the Iſraelites among themſelves, and permitted only with regard to ſtrangers.§ But it was not an eaſy matter, according to the injunctions of the law, to have any dealings with other countries; and no foreigners were allowed to ſtay in their country, but *Proſelytes*, that

* Judg. x. 4. † Ibid. xiii. 14. ‡ Ibid. v. 10.
§ Lev. xxv. 10.—Deut. xv. 1.—Lev. xxvi. 36.—Deut. xiii. 19.

is

is to ſay, ſuch as were circumciſed, and incorporated with the people of God.* So that their wealth, as I ſaid above, conſiſted chiefly in lands and cattle.

And, indeed, God promiſes them no other but theſe ſorts of riches, which are the moſt natural and the moſt ſolid. He ſays nothing to them about gold, ſilver, precious ſtones or coſtly furniture; and much leſs of other ſorts of riches, which depend on art and the inſtitution of man. But he tells them, that he will ſend them rain in due ſeaſon; that the earth ſhould produce plenty of corn; that the trees ſhould be loaded with fruit; that the harveſt, vintage and ſeed time ſhould follow one another without interruption. He promiſes them ſufficient food, undiſturbed ſleep, ſecurity, peace; and even victory over their enemies.† He adds that his favourable looks ſhall make them increaſe and multiply.‡ And in another place, that his bleſſing ſhould render their wifes fruitful: that he would bleſs their cattle, the folds of their ſheep, their barns, their ſtores, and the work of their hands. Such are the temporal bleſſings which God allows mankind to expect from him.

* 2 Chron. ii. 17. † Lev. xxvi. 3.—8.
‡ Deut. xxviii. 4.—6.

§ IX.

§ IX.—Arts and Trades.

I Know no people that ever gave themſelves up more entirely to huſbandry, than the Iſraelites. The Egyptians and Syrians joined thereto manufactures, navigation and commerce: but above all, the Phenicians, who finding themſelves too much ſtraitened for room on the ſea-coaſt, after the Iſraelites had driven them out of their country, were forced to have recourſe to trade, and to become, as it were, the Brokers and Carriers of all other nations. The Greeks followed their example, and excelled chiefly in the Arts. The Romans, on the other hand, deſpiſed the Arts, and devoted themſelves to Commerce. As to the Iſraelites, their own country ſupplied them with ſufficient food, and the ſea-coaſts were chiefly inhabited by the Philiſtines and Canaanites, who are the ſame as the Phenicians.* There was only the tribe of Zabulon, whoſe lot lying on the ſea-coaſt, invited them to traffic; and this ſeems to have been pointed out in the bleſſings of Jacob and Moſes.†

Neither do I find that they applied themſelves to Manufactures. Not but that the arts were then invented, as moſt of them are more ancient than the deluge: and it appears that the Iſraelites were not in want of excellent workmen, at leaſt in the

* Joſ. in App. † Gen. xlix. 13.—Deut. xxxiii. 19.

time of Moſes. Bezeleel and Ooliab, who made the Tabernacle, and whatever was neceſſary for the ſervice of God, are illuſtrious inſtances of this.* It is ſurpriſing of what a great variety of very difficult arts they were maſters. They underſtood the caſting and working of metals: they underſtood the cutting and engraving precious ſtones: they were Joiners, Tapeſtry-makers, Embroiderers and Perfumers.

Among theſe arts there are two, which I principally admire; the cutting of precious ſtones, and the caſting of figures, ſuch as the Cherubim of the Ark, and the golden Calf, which was made at that time.† They who are ever ſo little acquainted with the arts, know how much ingenious contrivance, and what a number of machines are requiſite for works of that nature. If theſe were already found out at that time, great progreſs had been made towards perfection even in thoſe arts that are merely ornamental: and if any ſecret was then known, by which theſe works could be executed with more eaſe, and a leſs apparatus of tools, the perfection they had arrived at, was ſtill the greater. But this only by the bye, to ſhew that the ancients, in thoſe remote ages, were not ſo dull and ignorant, as many imagine them to have been. In fact, the world was already of two thouſand five hundred years ſtanding in the time of Moſes.

But whether theſe two famous workmen

* Exod. xxxi. 2.---6. Ib. xxxvi. and xxxvii. &c.

† Exod. xxxii. 4.

had

had been taught by the Egyptians, or their knowledge was miraculous and inſpired by God, as the ſcripture ſeems to inſinuate, it does not appear that they had any ſucceſſors, or that, until the time of the Kings, there were any of the Iſraelites who were artificers by profeſſion, or who worked for the public. At the beginning of Saul's reign, the ſcripture takes notice, that there was not a ſmith in all the land of Iſrael; and that they were obliged to go among the Philiſtines to ſharpen even their tools of huſbandry.* It is true, that this was in conſequence of the oppreſſion they ſuffered under the Philiſtines, to prevent them from making arms. But, ſeveral years after this, David, in his flight, was obliged to take Goliah's ſword, which muſt have been ſomewhat unwieldy for him; and to take it out of the tabernacle of God, where it had been hung up as an everlaſting monument of his victory.† This makes me believe that there were no arms to be bought.

It is probable likewiſe that there was no bread to be ſold; ſince, on the ſame occaſion, Achimelech the High-Prieſt was forced to let David have the hallowed ſhew-bread.‡ And this moreover is a proof that they did not keep much bread, at a time, in their houſes; perhaps on account of the heat of the country. Therefore the Witch, whom Saul went to conſult, made ſome bread on purpoſe for him, when ſhe gave him ſome-

* 1 Kings xiii. 19. † Ibid. xxi. 9. ‡ Ibid. iv.

thing to eat that he might recover his ſtrength.* Every one had his oven in his houſe, ſince the law threatens them, as with a great misfortune, to reduce them to ſuch a famine, that ten women ſhould bake their bread in the ſame oven.† There were no bakers at Rome until the year five hundred and eighty after the building of that city.‡

Were we to conſider each trade in particular, we ſhould find moſt of them of no uſe to the Iſraelites Their plain way of life, and the mildneſs of the climate, freed them from a large train of conveniences, which we think we cannot do without, and with which our effeminacy and vanity, rather than any real neceſſity, encumber us: and as to what is really neceſſary, there were few things of that nature, which they could not do for themſelves. Whatever regarded their food, was done within doors. The women made their bread and dreſſed the victuals: they ſpun the wool, wove the ſtuffs, and made the clothes: the men did the reſt.

Homer deſcribes honeſt Eumæus making his own ſhoes, and tells us that he himſelf had built the magnificent ſtables for the cattle he bred.§ Ulyſſes alſo had built his own houſe himſelf, and ſet up, with great art, the bed, the ſtructure of which made him known again to his wife.‖ When he left Calypſo's iſland, he alone had built and rigged his ſhip.¶ Here it is we ſee the ſpirit

* 1 Kings xxviii, 24. † Lev. xxvi. 25. ‡ Plin. 13 c. 1. § Odyſſ. 14. ‖ Ibid. 23. ¶ Ibid. 5.

of

of theſe ancient times. It was an honour for a man to be able to do for himſelf whatever was uſeful in life, without depending on the ſkill of others: and this is what Homer commonly calls *Knowledge* and *Wiſdom*. Now, the authority of Homer (for I muſt ſay it once for all) appears to me of very great weight in all theſe points. He lived in the time of the Prophet Elias, ſomewhere about the coaſt of Abia Minor:* and whatever he writes with regard to the manners of the Greeks and Trojans, has a wonderful relation to what the ſcriptures tell us of the Hebrews and other Orientals; only as the Greeks were leſs ancient, they were alſo leſs poliſhed.

But, whatever may be ſaid with regard to the times preceding David, it is certain he left in his kingdom a great number of artificers of all ſorts; and, among others, Maſons, Carpenters, Blackſmiths and Goldſmiths, that is to ſay, ſome of all the different branches of ſuch as work in ſtone, wood and metals.† And that no one may ſurmiſe that theſe workmen were foreigners, it is ſaid, that Solomon choſe, out of all Iſrael, thirty thouſand workmen;‡ and that he had fourſcore thouſand hewers of ſtone in the mountains.§ It is true, he hired workmen of the King of Tyre, acknowledging that his ſubjects did not underſtand the cutting down wood as well as the Sidonians;‖ and that he ſent for an excellent

* Marm. Arundel. † 1 Chron. xxii. 15. ‡ 3 Kings v. 13. § Ibid. 15. ‖ Ibid. v. 6.

Founder, called Hiram, to make the ſacred Veſſels.*

But, as luxury increaſed after the diviſion of the two Kingdoms, it is probable that the number of Artificers therein was always very great. I find in the genealogy of the tribe of Juda, a place called the *Valley of Artificers*, becauſe, ſays the ſcripture, *Artificers were there*,† I find again a whole family of Workers of fine linen;‡ and another of Potters, who worked for the King, and lived in his gardens.§ All this ſhews in what eſteem the arts were held, and the care that was taken to perpetuate the memory of ſuch as applied themſelves to them. The Prophet Iſaias, among his other threats denounced againſt Jeruſalem, fortells that God would take from her ſuch as were knowing in the arts:‖ And when that city was taken, it is ſeveral times ſaid, that even the artificers were carried away.¶ But a proof that they never had any conſiderable Manufactures is, that the Prophet Ezechiel deſcribing the abundance of merchandize that came from Tyre, makes mention of nothing carried thither from Juda and Iſrael, but the beſt corn, balm, honey, oil and roſin, all which were the produce of their own country.**

Such were the occupations of the Iſraelites, and ſuch the means of their ſubſiſtence. But let us now come to ſomething

3 Kings * viii. 13. † 1 Chron. iv. 14. ‡ Ibid. 21. § Ibid. 23. ‖ Iſ. iii. 3. ¶ 4 Kings xxiv. 14. ** Ez. xxvii. 17.

ſtill

ſtill more particular; and let us deſcribe, as near as poſſible, their dreſs, the form of their houſes, their furniture, their food, and their whole manner of life. They roſe early, as the ſcripture takes notice in an infinite number of paſſages, that is to ſay, when a thing of ever ſo little importance is mentioned. Hence, in their ſtyle, to *riſe early*, ſignifies, in general, to do any thing with care and pleaſure; and in this ſenſe it is often ſaid, that God *roſe early* to ſend Prophets to his people, and to exhort them to repentance.* A natural conſequence this of the toil of huſbandry: and in which they were followed by the Greeks and Romans. Theſe latter alſo roſe very early in the morning, and worked till the evening. They then bathed, afterwards ſupped, and went to bed in good time.

§ X.—Their DRESS.

AS to the Dreſs of the Iſraelites, we cannot exactly know the form of it. They made no figures to repreſent men; and we cannot be well informed of things of this nature, otherwiſe than by the eyes. We may however gueſs at ſome of them from the ſtatues which remain of the Greeks and other ancients. As to the modern paintings, they only ſerve to give us falſe ideas of their dreſs. I ſpeak not only of thoſe Gothic

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.---Jer. vii. 13. xii. vii. xxxv. 14.

pieces,

pieces, where all the figures, in whatever age, or in whatever country they lived, are dreſſed like thoſe the Painter had been accuſtomed to ſee, that is to ſay, as the French and Germans were dreſſed three or four hundred years ago: I ſpeak of the works of the greateſt Painters, except Raphael, Pouſſin, and a few others, who had well ſtudied antiquity and the manners of each age, or, as they expreſs it, the *Coſtume*. All the art of the reſt conſiſts in repreſenting the people of the Levant, ſuch as they ſaw them at Venice, and other Ports in Italy. And as to the hiſtories of the New Teſtament, it conſiſts ſolely in repreſenting the Jews like thoſe of their own country. However, ſince the greateſt part of the prints of ſacred Hiſtory are copied from ſuch like originals, we have received the impreſſion of them from our infancy, and are accuſtomed to repreſent to ourſelves the Patriarchs with turbans on their heads, and beards hanging down to the girdle: and the Phariſees of the Goſpel with hoods and pouches.—Miſtakes of this nature, it is true, are pretty harmleſs: but it would be better not to be led into them at all, if poſſible.

The ancients, in general, wore long garments, as moſt nations in the world do to this day, and as we ourſelves did only three hundred years ago. A perſon may ſooner cover himſelf all at once, than each part of his body one after another: and large flowing garments have more of dignity and true gracefulneſs in them. Wide

clothes

clothes have always been worn in hot countries, and little care has ever been taken about covering the arms, legs, and feet, which latter had only ſoles faſtened to them in different manners. Thus their clothes had ſcarce any make in them, being only pieces of ſtuff of the bigneſs and ſhape the garment was to have: there was nothing to cut out, and little to ſew. They had moreover the art of weaving, in a loom, garments with ſleeves all of a piece without a ſeam, like the under-garment of JESUS-CHRIST.

The faſhions never changed, any more than they do at preſent all over the Levant. And, indeed, as clothes are made to cover the body, and as the human body is of the ſame ſhape in all ages, no ſolid reaſon can be alledged for that prodigious variety in dreſs, and thoſe frequent changes of faſhions to which we are accuſtomed. Reaſon indeed directs us to ſeek, in our dreſs, what is moſt convenient for covering the body ſufficiently againſt the injuries of the air, according to the climate and ſeaſon of the year, and for leaving an entire liberty to the body in every motion. Decency ought alſo to be conſidered according to the perſon's age, ſex and profeſſion. Some attention alſo may be paid to comelineſs of dreſs, provided we do not incumber ourſelves, under that pretext, with troubleſome ornaments; but, like the ancients, be content with agreeable colours, and natural draperies. And when we have once found what is convenient

nient and handſome, we ought never to change.

And truly, the inventors of new faſhions are not people of the beſt ſenſe. They are, generally ſpeaking, women and young people, aſſiſted by ſhopkeepers, ignorant taylors, mantua-makers and milliners, who have nothing in view but their own intereſt. Nevertheleſs theſe trifles are attended with very ſerious conſequences. The expence occaſioned by ſuperfluous ornaments, and the change of faſhions, is very conſiderable with reſpect to moſt people in middling circumſtances, and is one of the cauſes of the difficulties found in the married ſtate. It is a continual ſource of quarrels between the old and young, and the reverence for times paſt is thereby very much diminiſhed. Young people, in whom the imagination bears abſolute ſway, ſeeing the pictures of their anceſtors in dreſſes, which appear to them completely ridiculous only becauſe their eyes are no longer accuſtomed to them, can ſcarce perſuade themſelves that they were people of ſenſe, or that their maxims are fit to be followed. In ſhort, thoſe who pique themſelves on the neatneſs and elegance of dreſs, are forced to make that concern a conſiderable employment, and a ſtudy, which certainly does not contribute to the elevation of their minds, or to render them capable of great undertakings.

As the ancients changed not their faſhions, the rich had always a great quantity of clothes by them, and were never expoſed

to

to the inconvenience of waiting for a new ſuit, or of getting them made in a hurry. Lucullus had in his wardrobe five thouſand *Chlamydes*,* which were a ſort of military cloke; and by this we may judge of what he had beſides. It was a common thing to make preſents of clothes, and always of two of a ſort for change, that one might be worn, while the other was waſhing; as we do with our linen.

The ſtuffs were generally made of wool. In Egypt and Syria they alſo wore fine linen, cotton and *byſſus*, which laſt was the fineſt of all. This *Byſſus*, which the ſcripture ſo often mentions, is a ſort of ſilk of a golden yellow, which grows on a large ſhell-fiſh.† As to the ſilk we have from the ſilk-worms, it was totally unknown in the time of the Iſraelites; and the uſe of it became not common, on this ſide the Indies, till four hundred years after JESUS-CHRIST. The beauty of the clothes conſiſted in the fineneſs of the ſtuffs, or in the colour of them. The white, the purple, either red or violet, were in the moſt eſteem; but the white ſeems to have been the colour moſt generally worn by the Iſraelites, as well as among the Greeks and Romans; ſince Solomon ſays: *at all times let thy garments be white*,‡ inſtead of ſaying: *be always clean*. In fact, nothing is more ſimple than to make uſe of wool or flax, ſuch as nature

* Hor. 1 Ep. 6. † Geſn. Hiſt. Animal. L. 4. de Pinná.
‡ Eccleſ. ix. 8.

pro-

produces them, without being dyed. Young people of both ſexes wore clothes variegated with different colours: and ſuch was Joſeph's veſt, of which his brethren ſtript him when they ſold him.* Such alſo, in the time of David, were the robes of the daughters of Kings.†

The clothes were ornamented with fringes or edgings of purple, or with embroidery; and with ſome claſps of gold or precious ſtones, where theſe were wanted. Magnificence of dreſs conſiſted in often changing, and wearing none, but what was clean and whole. Finally, no one will doubt of the Iſraelites going plainly dreſt, if it be conſidered how ſimple and plain the dreſs of the Greeks was in the time of their greateſt luxury. The ancient ſtatues, Trajan's pillar and other Baſs-relieves, are ſtill to be ſeen.

The garments, moſt frequently mentioned in ſcripture, are the *Tunic* and *Cloke*; and the dreſs of the Greeks and the Romans conſiſted only of theſe two garments. The *Tunic* was wide, to leave perfect liberty of motion at work. They wore it looſe, when they were doing nothing; but they tied it up cloſe with a girdle, when they went to work or to take a walk. Hence that common phraſe in ſcripture: *Ariſe, gird thy loins, and do ſuch a thing.* The Iſraelites were commanded to wear tufts of a blue colour at the corners of their clokes, to make them con-

* Gen. xxxvii. 23. † 2 Kings xiii. 18.

tinually

tinually attentive to, and mindful of the law of God.* Their heads were covered with a ſort of Tiara, like that of the Perſians and Chaldeans, becauſe it was a mark of mourning to go bareheaded; and they wore their hair, becauſe ſhaving the head was another mark of mourning. As to the beard, they certainly wore it long, as appears from the inſtance of the Embaſſadors David ſent to the King of the Ammonites, half of whoſe beards that ill-adviſed Prince ordered to be ſhaved off, by way of affront: ſo that they were forced to ſtay ſome time at Jericho in order to let their beards grow again, before they durſt appear in public.† He ordered alſo half of their garments to be cut away in ſuch a manner, as ſhews that they wore them of a conſiderable length.

They bathed frequently, as is ſtill the practice in hot countries; and ſtill more frequently waſhed their feet, ſince, as they wore only ſandals, they could not walk without gathering up a great deal of duſt. Hence the ſcripture ſpeaks ſo much of waſhing the feet at coming into the houſe, going to meals or to bed. But as water dries the ſkin and the hair, they anointed themſelves with plain oil, or with ſome, in which they had infuſed aromatic drugs; and this is what they commonly called *Ointment*. The ſame is practiſed at this day in the Indies.

We ſee, in ſeveral places of ſcripture,

* 2 Kings x. 44. † Ib.

how the women dreſſed, and adorned themſelves. God reproaching Jeruſalem with its infidelities, under the figure of a huſband, who had drawn his wife from the loweſt degree of poverty to heap on her riches, ſays by the Prophet Ezechiel:* that he had given her very rich ſtuffs, and of various colours, a ſilken Girdle, purple Shoes, Bracelets, a Necklace, Pendants, and a Crown, or rather a Mitre, ſuch as the women of Syria wore a long time after;† that he had adorned her with gold, ſilver and the moſt coſtly ſtuffs. When Judith dreſſed herſelf to go to Holofernes, it is ſaid that ſhe waſhed and anointed herſelf, plaited her hair, placed a mitre on her head, put on the garments of her gladneſs, ſandals on her feet, and adorned herſelf with bracelets, pendants, and rings.‡ To conclude, no one can deſire more particulars with regard to theſe ornaments of the ſex, than what we read in the Prophet Iſaias, when he reproaches the Daughters of Sion with their luxury and vanity:§ and truly their corruption was arrived at its higheſt pitch.

§ XI. Their FURNITURE and HOUSES.

MUCH leſs Furniture is required in hot countries than in ours; and the ſimplicity and plainneſs of the manners of the Iſraelites, in all other reſpects, afford room

* Ezek. xvi. 10.---13. † Picta Lupæ barbara mitra. *Juv. Sat.* 3. ‡ Judith x. 3. &c. § Iſ. iii. 16. &c.

to

to believe that they had very little. The Law often mentions wooden and earthen Veſſels; and earthen-ware was very common among the Greeks and Romans, before they were corrupted by luxury. Mention is made of them among the refreſhments brought to David, during the war of Abſalom.* We find the Furniture that was eſteemed the moſt neceſſary in the words of the Sunamite woman, who lodged the Prophet Eliſeus. *Let us make*, ſays ſhe to her huſband, *a little Chamber for this man of God, and put in it a ſmall bed for him, and a table, and a ſtool, and a candleſtick.*† Their beds were only ſmall couches, without hangings or curtains, except ſome light covering ſpread over the head, which the Greeks called *Conopæum*, becauſe it ſerved to keep off the gnats. Thoſe, who affected grandeur and magnificence, had beds of ivory, as the Prophet Amos‡ reproaches the rich in his time; and the moſt delicate ſort lay on very ſoft beds, covered with rich ſtuffs, and ſprinkled with ſcented waters.§ The beds were placed againſt the wall, ſince it is ſaid that King Ezechias, hearing the threat of his approaching death, turned towards the wall to weep.‖

The Candleſtick, mentioned among the furniture for Elizeus, was probably one of thoſe large chandeliers placed on the ground to receive one or more lamps. Until that

* 2 Kings xviii. 28, 29. † 4 Kings iv. 10.
‡ Amos vi. 4. § Prov. vii. 16, 17. ‖ 4 Kings xx. 2.

time, and long after, that is to ſay, even in the time of the Romans, nothing was burnt to give light, but oil. Hence in the ſcripture whatever gives light to the body or mind, whatever guides or affords joy and pleaſure, is called a *Lamp*. There is no appearance that they had any tapeſtry-hangings in their houſes; none is uſed in any of the hot countries, becauſe the bare walls are more cooling. Carpets are only uſed to ſit and lie down upon: and mention is made of them in Ezechiel among the merchandiſe the Arabians brought to Tyre.* Carpets are alſo mentioned among the refreſhments brought to David; by which we may be induced to think that they uſed them in the fields, for in their houſes they had chairs.

Their houſes were different from ours in all thoſe particulars, which are ſtill obſervable in hot countries. The roofs are flat like a terrace-walk; the windows are cloſed with lattices or curtains. They have no chimnies; the lodgings are below, and when a ground-floor can be had, it is preferred to any other.

That the roofs of the houſes were flat in the land of Iſrael and in the neighbouring countries, we have many proofs in ſcripture. Rachab concealed the ſpies of Joſue on the top of her houſe.† When Samuel declared to Saul that God had choſen him for King, he made him lie that night on the roof of the houſe,‡ which is ſtill a common

* Ezek. xxvii. 20, 21. † Joſ. ii. 6. ‡ 1 Kings ix. 25.

practice

practice in hot countries. David was walking on the roof of his palace, when he ſaw Bethſabee bathing.* Abſalom ſet up a tent on the roof of the ſame palace, when he lay with his father's concubines.† This action was like taking poſſeſſion of the kingdom; and it was neceſſary to make it public, to ſhew that he was irrevocably determined on his revolt. People went up upon the roofs of their houſes, on occaſion of any great alarms, as is ſeen in the two paſſages of Iſaias.‡ All this ſhews why the law ordered battlements to be built quite round the tops of their houſes,§ viz. leſt any one ſhould be killed by falling down; and helps us to underſtand that expreſſion in the Goſpel: *That which you hear in the ear, preach ye on the houſe-tops.*‖ Every houſe was a ſtage ready ſet up for any one, who deſired to make himſelf heard at a diſtance.

The Lattices of the windows are mentioned in the Book of Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and the hiſtory of the death of Ochoſias King of Iſrael.¶ When King Joachim burnt the book which Jeremias had written by the order of God, he was in his winter-apartment ſitting before a pan of lighted coals.** Hence we may judge that they had no chimnies, which, in reality, are the invention of cold countries. In hot countries people content themſelves with ſtoves in the kitchen to dreſs their victuals.

* 2 Kings xi. 2. † Ibid xvi. 22. ‡ Iſ. xvi. 2. xxii. 1. § Deut. xxii. 8. ‖ Matt. x. 27. ¶ Prov. viii. 6. Cant. ii. 9. 4 Kings i. 2. ** Jer. xxxvi. 22.

They made a great uſe of ſtone in building, particularly at Jeruſalem, where it is very common; and they had the art of hewing it out of the quarries in very large pieces. Mention is made in the buildings of Solomon of ſtones eight or ten cubits long, that is, twelve or fifteen feet;* and what are called *coſtly ſtones*, are undoubtedly different ſorts of marble.

The beauty of their buildings conſiſted leſs in ornaments placed in ſome particular parts, than in the entire form, and in the cutting and joining of the ſtones. They took great care to have all ſmooth, exactly perpendicular, ſquare and level. It is thus Homer expreſſes himſelf, when he commends any building; and we ſtill admire this kind of beauty in the buildings of the ancient Egyptians. The Iſraelites made uſe of odoriferous woods, ſuch as Cedar and Cypreſs to wainſcot their grandeſt buildings, and to make the cielings and colonades. This is ſeen in the deſcription we have of the temple and palace of Solomon; and David ſays that he dwelt in a houſe of Cedar, to expreſs the magnificence of his apartments.†

* 3 Kings vii. 10. † 3 Kings vi. 18.---vii. 2, 3. &c. Cant. iii. 16.---2 Kings vii. 2.

§ XII.

§ XII. Their FOOD.

WITH regard to their poſture at table, the Iſraelites eat ſitting, as the Greeks did in the time of Homer: and it is neceſſary to take notice of this, in order to diſtinguiſh times; for afterwards, that is to ſay, from the time they became ſubject to the Perſians, they eat reclined on couches, like the Perſians and the other Orientals,* from whom the Greeks and Romans borrowed that cuſtom. Thoſe who led regular lives, did not eat till after they had worked, and pretty late. For this reaſon, *eating and drinking in the morning*,† ſignifies, in the ſcripture-language, irregularity and exceſs. Their food was ſimple and plain. They uſually ſpoke only of *eating of bread*, and *drinking of water*. Hence the word *Bread*, in ſcripture, is taken for all ſorts of food. They did not cut their bread, but broke it, as they uſed only ſmall, long or thin loaves, which is ſtill the cuſtom in ſeveral countries. The firſt favour Booz granted to Ruth, was to drink of the ſame water with his ſervants, to come and eat with them, and to dip her bread in vinegar :‡ and one may ſee by the compliments ſhe paid him in return, that the favour was not a ſmall one.

We may judge of what their moſt uſual food conſiſted by the proviſions David re-

* Eſth. i, 6—8. † Eccleſ. x. 16. Iſ. v. 11.
‡ Ruth ii. 9.

ceived,

ceived, on different occaſions, from Abigail, Siba, and Berſellai; and from what was brought him by thoſe who joined him in Hebron. The ſorts there ſpecified are bread and wine, wheat and barley, with the meal of both; beans and lentils, parched corn, bunches of raiſins, dried figs, honey, butter, oil, ſheep, oxen and fat calves.* There are many ſorts of grain and pulſe in this enumeration; and, indeed, ſuch was the moſt common food of the Egyptians, and alſo of the Romans in their beſt times, and when they applied themſelves moſt to agriculture.† The derivation of thoſe famous names, FABIUS, PISO, CICERO, and LENTULUS is well known. We ſee the great uſe the Iſraelites made of milk, in this advice of the Wiſe-man: *Let the milk of the goats be enough for thy food, and for the neceſſaries of thy houſe, and for the maintenance of thy hand-maids.*‡

Although they were allowed to eat fiſh, I find no mention made of its ever being uſed until the latter times. It is thought that the ancients deſpiſed fiſh as a food too delicate and light for a robuſt conſtitution: nor, indeed, is fiſh once mentioned in Homer, nor in any thing the Greeks have written concerning the heroic ages:§ and among the Hebrews we find ſcarce any mention of ſauces or ragouts. Their entertainments conſiſted of ſubſtantial, well-fed meat: and

* 1 Kings xxv. 18.---2 Ib. xvi. 1.---Ib. xvii. 28.
† Clem. Alex. 2. Pædag. c. 1. ‡ Prov. xxvii. 27.
§ Plat. Rep. 3.

milk

milk and honey were counted among the greateſt dainties. In reality, before ſugar was broughf from the Indies, nothing was known more pleaſing to the taſte than honey: it was uſed in preſerving fruit, and mixed up in the richeſt paſtry. Inſtead of milk, butter only is often mentioned, by which they meant cream, which is the moſt delicious part of the milk. The offerings appointed by the law, ſhew that they had different ſorts of paſtry, ſome kneaded with oil, and ſome without it.*

Here is the proper place to ſpeak of the meats allowed or prohibited by the Law. It was not peculiar to the Hebrews to abſtain from the fleſh of certain animals thro' a principal of religion: the neighbouring nations did the ſame. Neither the Egyptians nor Syrians eat fiſh; and ſome have thought that it was out of ſuperſtition, that the ancient Greeks abſtained therefrom. The Egyptians of Thebes did not eat mutton, becauſe they adored Hammon under the figure of a ram: but they killed goats.† In other places they abſtained from goats-fleſh, but ſacrificed ſheep. The Egyptian Prieſts abſtained from all ſorts of meat and drink imported from abroad: and, as to the produce of their own country, beſides fiſh, they abſtained alſo from beaſts that have round feet, or ſlit into many toes; and from ſuch as have no horns, and from birds of prey.‡ Several would eat nothing that

* Lev. ii. 4, 5. &c. † Herod. 2.
‡ Porph. Abſtin. 4.

had

had ever had life: and in the times of their purifications, they abſtained even from eggs, and from all ſorts of herbs and pulſe. All the Egyptians, in general, never eat beans. They looked upon the ſwine as an unclean animal. Whoever had bruſhed againſt one in going along, went immediately and waſhed himſelf and his clothes.* Plato in his Republic, reckons the feeding of ſwine among the ſuperfluities introduced by luxury.† And, in reality, they are of no uſe, but for the table. Every one knows that the Bramins of India, even to this day, neither eat nor kill any kind of animal; and it is certain they have lived thus for upwards of two thouſand years.

The Law of Moſes therefore ordered nothing new or ſingular in this point: but this law was neceſſary to keep the people within due bounds, hindering them thereby from imitating the ſuperſtition of their neighbours, without giving them an entire liberty, which they might have abuſed. For this abſtinence with regard to certain meats, was of uſe towards preſerving both their health and their morals. God impoſed on them this yoke, not only to tame their indocile minds, but to keep them from ſuch things as might be of prejudice to them. They were forbidden to eat either blood or fat. The one and the other are hard of digeſtion: and, although ſtrong and laborious people, ſuch as were our Iſraelites, ought

* Herod. 2. † Plato de Rep.

to

to have been leſs liable to any inconveniencies therefrom than others, yet, while there was room for choice, it was better to give them that food which was the moſt wholeſome. Swine's fleſh is alſo very heavy on the ſtomach;* and the ſame may be ſaid of thoſe fiſh which have no ſcales. Their fleſh is fat and oily, whether it be tender like that of eels, or hard like that of tunny, whales, or others of the cetaceous kinds. Thus a natural reaſon may be given for moſt of theſe prohibitions, as St Clement of Alexandria long ago obſerved.†

As to the moral reaſons, the writers on Spirituality have all along reckoned gluttony the firſt vice to be attacked, as being the ſource of moſt others.‡ The Socratic Philoſophers alſo very much recommended ſobriety and temperance, ſo that Plato

* It certainly is to the ſedentary and ſtudious; but the principal reaſon why it was forbidden to the Iſraelites, was the danger of their being drawn into idolatry by the uſe of that food. The ſwine was an animal ever at hand in the heathen nations, it was the ordinary victim in all places, of every body, and in all ſeaſons. Every one could get this ſacrifice without trouble or much expence; and inſtead of inviting their friends and relations, they ſent a part of the blood and fat, or a piece of the fleſh, to ſuch as wiſhed to partake of the merit of this ſacrifice. Hence prohibiting the food of this animal to the Jews, was keeping them at a greater diſtance from a dangerous intercourſe with their idolatrous neighbours. A ſimilar reaſon may be given for moſt of the particular practices enjoined the Jews. They were deſigned as an incloſure and wall of ſeparation againſt idolatry in behalf of a people immenſely inclined to it. See Pluche's Demonſtration of the Goſpel in Engliſh, and his Hiſtory of the Heavens, vol. I. p. 208.

† 2 Padag. 1. ‡ Caſſ. Inſt. 5.

thought

thought nothing could be done in Sicily towards a reformation of manners, while the people continued to make two large meals a day * It is thought that the deſign of the Pythagoreans was to render men juſt and diſintereſted, by accuſtoming them to live on little. Now one of the principal branches of gluttony is a deſire of a variety of meats. Too great a quantity of one ſort ſoon cloys; but as the variety is infinite, the deſire of it is inſatiable. Tertullian compriſes all theſe reaſons in the following paſſage. "If the Law retrenches the uſe "of ſome ſorts of meat, and declares un-"clean ſome animals which before had been "bleſſed, know that it was done with a de-"ſign to train up men to temperance, and "to bridle that gluttony, which regretted "the loſs of the melons and cucumbers of "Egypt, while they were fed with the bread "of Angels. And ſee, how at the ſame "time, all the attendants of gluttony are "prevented, viz. luxury and impurity ... "Again another end was propoſed, which "was to extinguiſh, in part, the love of "money, by taking away the pretext of "its being neceſſary to provide ſubſiſtence. "... Laſtly, it was to form man to faſt-"ing more eaſily for God, by accuſtoming "him to fewer ſorts of meat, and thoſe of "the plaineſt kinds."†

* Ep. vii. † Tert. in Marc. c. 18.

§ XIII.

§ XIII.—PURIFICATIONS.

THE Purifications appointed by the Law were grounded on the ſame reaſons, as was the diſtinction of meats. The neighbouring people practiſed the like: among the reſt, the Egyptians, whoſe Prieſts ſhaved off their hair every third day, and waſhed their whole body twice every night, and twice or thrice every day.* The legal purifications of the Iſraelites were of uſe both with reſpect to health and morals. Cleanlineſs of body is a ſymbol of the purity of the ſoul: and for this reaſon, ſome ſaints have affected dirtineſs from a ſpirit of penance, to make themſelves more deſpiſed, and the better to expreſs outwardly the abhorrence they had of their ſins. Hence likewiſe exterior purification, in ſcripture, is called *Sanctification*, becauſe it renders ſenſible the interior purity, with which we ought to approach holy things. One may venture to ſay, that cleanlineſs is a natural effect of virtue, ſince naſtineſs, moſt commonly, proceeds from ſloth and a vulgar mind.

Cleanlineſs moreover is neceſſary for the preſervation of health, and the prevention of diſeaſes; eſpecially in hot countries. People there are naturally more cleanly: the heat of the climate invites them to ſtrip, bathe, and often to change their clothes; whereas, in cold climates, people are more afraid of

* Herod. 2.—Porphyr. de abſtin.

water and the air, and are more benumbed and ſlothful. It is certain that the naſtineſs of the lower claſs of people among us, and eſpecially of the poorer ſort, and ſuch as live in towns, either breeds or keeps up ſeveral diſtempers. What then would the caſe be in hot countries, where the air is ſooner corrupted, and water more ſcarce? Beſides, the ancients made little uſe of linen, and woollen is not ſo eaſily cleaned.

Let us here admire the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, who gave his people laws ſo advantageous to them on ſo many different accounts; ſince, at one and the ſame time, they ſerved to accuſtom them to obedience, to keep them from ſuperſtition, to regulate their morals, and to preſerve their health. It is thus, in the ſtructure of animals and plants, we ſee ſo many different parts ſerving for ſeveral uſes. Now it was of importance that the precepts concerning cleanlineſs ſhould make a part of their Religion, becauſe, as it regarded the inſide of their houſes, and the moſt ſecret actions of life, there was nothing but the fear of God could enforce their obſervation. In the mean time God formed their conſciences by theſe exterior and ſenſible practices, and accuſtomed them to acknowledge that nothing was hid from his ſight; and that it is not ſufficient to be pure in the eyes of men. Tertullian underſtands theſe laws in this manner, when he ſays: "Even in the com-
"merce of life and the ordinary actions of
"men, at home and abroad, he determined
"every

"every thing, even to the taking care of "their plates and diſhes; to the end, that "meeting every where with theſe precepts "of the Law, they might not be a moment "without looking up to God."* And afterwards: "To inforce this law, which "was rather favourable than burthenſome, "the ſame goodneſs of God appointed "Prophets, who taught theſe maxims worthy of himſelf: *Waſh yourſelves, be clean, "take away the evil of your devices from my "eyes*, &c." † So that the people were ſufficiently inſtructed in the meaning of all theſe ceremonies, and outward practices.

Such were the grounds of the laws that preſcribed bathing and waſhing the clothes after touching a dead body, or any unclean animal, and upon ſeveral other occaſions.‡ Hence alſo aroſe the purification of veſſels by water or fire; of houſes where any infection appeared;§ of women after childbirth; and the ſeparation of Lepers; altho' the white Leproſy,‖ which is the only one mentioned in ſcripture, be rather a deformity than a diſeaſe.¶

The Prieſts ſeparated the Lepers, judged of other legal impurities, and preſcribed the method of purification. Thus they practiſed one branch of medicine: and although the ſcripture ſpeaks of Phyſicians,** it is probable Surgeons are meant there, becauſe,

* In Marc. lib. 2. c. 19. † Iſ. i. 16. ‡ Lev. xi. 25. 31.—Ib. xiii. 58.—Numb. xxxi. 23. § Numb. xiv. 48. ‖ Lev. xii. 4. ¶ Aug. ii. Quæſt. Evan. 40. ** Iſ. iii. 7.

among the ancients, these two professions were not distinct. The Law speaks of them, when it condemns him who had wounded a man, to pay the Physician's fee.* And, in another place, mention is made of bandages, plaisters and salve;† but no where, that I know of, of purges or regimen. When King Asa had the gout, he is blamed for putting too much confidence in the skill of Physicians.‡ Perhaps the Israelites still followed the same maxims as the Greeks did in the heroic times, whose Physicians, according to Plato,§ contented themselves with topical applications for the healing of wounds, without prescribing any particular regimen or diet; supposing that other distempers would be easily prevented or cured by a good constitution, and a rational management of the sick. As to wounds, they are scarce avoidable from different accidents, even in ordinary work.

The Israelites shunned all intercourse with strangers in consequence of the laws of purification, and those regarding the choice of meats. For although most of the neighbouring nations had customs somewhat similar to theirs, they were not the same: so that an Israelite might always presume that the stranger he met, had eaten pork, or of some victim offered to idols, or had touched some unclean animal. Hence it it was not lawful either to eat with them or

* Exod. xxi. 19. † Is. i. 6.—Jer. viii. 22.—xlvi. 11.
‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 12. § Rep. 3.

to

to enter their houſes: and this keeping at a diſtance from them was again of uſe towards preſerving their morals, being a bar againſt too great an intimacy with ſtrangers, which is always pernicious to the generality of mankind; and which was much more ſo then, on account of idolatry. The Egyptians were much attached to this maxim; and the ſcripture takes notice that they would not eat with the Hebrews.* Herodotus alſo aſſures us, that the Egyptians would not either ſalute a Greek, or uſe his knife or plate.† The Mahometans, even at this day, have many ſimilar practices: but, of all people, the Indians have the moſt, and are the moſt ſuperſtitiouſly attached to them.

The Iſraelites, however, did not keep at the ſame diſtance equally from all ſtrangers, though they included them all under the general name of *Goim* or Gentiles. They abhorred all Idolaters, eſpecially ſuch as were not circumciſed; for they were not the only people who practiſed circumciſion. It was in uſe among all the deſcendants of Abraham, as the Iſmaelites, the Medianites, and the Idumeans; as alſo among the Ammonites and Moabites, the deſcendants of Lot.‡ The Egyptians themſelves, though their origin had nothing in common with the Hebrews, looked upon circumciſion as a neceſſary purification, and eſteemed ſuch as were not circumciſed, unclean.§ As to

* Gen. xliii. 32. † Herod. 2. ‡ Jer. ix, 45, &c.
§ Herod.—Philo.

the Iſraelites they tolerated the uncircumciſed, who adored the true God, ſo far as to allow them to dwell in the holy land, provided they obſerved the law of nature and abſtinence from blood: but if they ſuffered themſelves to be circumciſed, they were reputed Children of Abraham, and conſequently obliged to keep the whole law of Moſes. The Rabbins call theſe latter, *Proſelytes of Juſtice* or Righteouſneſs; and the uncircumciſed, *Proſelytes of Abode*; and ſometimes *Noachides*, as being obliged to obſerve only thoſe precepts, which God gave Noah, at his coming out of the Ark.* In Solomon's time there were above a hundred and fifty thouſand Proſelytes in the land of Iſrael.†

Of all the ſtrangers whom the Iſraelites were to ſhun the moſt, were thoſe nations that lay under a curſe, the deſcendants of Chanaan, whom God had ordered them to extirpate. I only find theſe, as I ſaid before, with whom they were forbidden to intermarry.‡ The Wife of Moſes was a Medianiteſs.§ Booz is commended for marrying Ruth, a Moabiteſs.‖ The mother of Abſalom was a daughter of the King of Geſſur.¶ Amaſa was the ſon of an Iſmaelite, and of Abigail, the ſiſter of David.** Solomon married the daughter of the King of Egypt,†† at the beginning of his reign, at

* Seld. de Jure Nat. † 2 Chron. ii. 17. ‡ Exod. xxxiv. 16.---Deut. vii. 3. § Exod. ii. 21. ‖ Ruth iv. 11. ¶ 2 Kings iii. 3. ** 1 Chron. ii. 17. †† 3 Kings iii. 1.

the

the time he was moſt pleaſing to God: ſo that what the ſcripture ſays afterwards to blame theſe marriages with ſtrangers, is to be underſtood of the Chanaanitiſh-women whom he married, and the criminal complaiſance he ſhewed them, ſo far as, inſtead of converting them, to adore their idols.*

Much more was marriage free among all the Iſraelites; nor was it neceſſary that every one ſhould marry into his own tribe, as many have thought, and even ſome of the Fathers of the Church. This law only regarded heireſſes, to prevent the confounding of the lots of inheritance:† ſo that David married Michol, daughter of Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin:‡ and another of his wives was Achinoam of Jeſrael, a city of the tribe of Ephraim.§

§ XIV.—Marriages. Women.

ACCORDING to the manner of life of the Iſraelites, marriage brought no incumbrance with it, but rather comfort and help, as intended in its primitive Inſtitution. The women were as laborious as the men, and worked within doors, while their huſbands were employed in the fields. The women dreſſed the victuals, and ſerved them up to table, as may be ſeen in Homer, and ſeveral places of ſcripture. When Samuel repreſents to the people what would

* 3 Kings xi. 2. † Numb. xxxvi. 3.—12. ‡ 1 Kings xviii. 23. § 2 Kings iii. 2.

be

be the behaviour of their kings, he ſays: *Your Kings will take your daughters to make him ointments* or perfumes, *and to be his cooks and bakers.** The pretext Amnon, the ſon of David, made uſe of to get to his houſe his ſiſter Thamar, whom he raviſhed, was to take a meſs of broth at her hands, which ſhe made herſelf, though the King's daughter.†

The Women made all the clothes; and their moſt ordinary employment was to weave ſtuffs in a loom, as it is now to make up linen and work in tapeſtry. We ſee inſtances of this in Homer in the perſons of Calypſo and Circe. We ſee the ſame in Theocritus, in Terence, and in all the Claſſics:‡ and what appears to me ſtill more remarkable is, that this cuſtom continued at Rome among the Ladies of the higheſt rank in a very corrupt age, ſince the clothes Auguſtus commonly wore were made by his wife, his ſiſter and his daughters.§ If proofs drawn from ſcripture are required, it is mentioned that the mother of Samuel made him a little veſt, which ſhe brought him on great ſolemnities:‖ and we ſee the ſtrong woman of Solomon induſtriouſly employing flax and wool, turning the ſpindle with her own hands, and giving two garments of a ſort to each of her ſervants.¶

All works of this nature are done within doors, nor do they require any great bodily

* 1 Kings viii. 13. † 2 Kings xiii. 8. ‡ Theoc. Idyl. 15. Terent. Heautont. Act. 2. ſcene 2. § Suet. Aug. ‖ 1 Kings ii. 19. ¶ Prov. xxxi. 13. &c.

ſtrength.

ſtrength. The ancients, therefore, did not think them worthy of the employment of men, but left them all to the women, who are naturally fonder of a ſedentary life, neater, and more attached to ſmall things. It was probably for the ſame reaſon that women kept the gates, and took care of the apartments, even in the palaces of Kings. There was only a ſervant-maid at the gate of King Iſboſeth; and ſhe moreover was employed in winnowing corn.* And when David fled before Abſalom, he left ten women, his concubines, to take care of the palace.† The women lived ſeparate from the men, and very retired, eſpecially ſuch as were widows. Thus Judith lived ſhut up with her women in an upper apartment, like the Penelope of Homer ‡

The Iſraelites accompanied their marriages with feaſting and great rejoicings; and ſuch was their magnificence of dreſs on theſe occaſions, that David could not find a more juſt compariſon to expreſs the beauty of the ſun, than that of a bride-groom.§ The feſtival laſted ſeven days. This is ſeen even in the time of the Patriarchs, when Jacob complaining of Lia being impoſed on him inſtead of Rachel, Laban ſays to him: *Make up the week of days of this match.*‖ Sampſon having married a Philiſtine woman, gave an entertainment for ſeven days together, and the ſeventh day concluded the

* 2 Kings iv. 5. † Ibid. xv. 16. ‡ Judith viii. 5.
§ Pſ. xviii. 6. ‖ Gen. xxix. 27.

feſtival.

feſtival.* When young Tobias was for returning home, his Father-in-law conjured him to ſtay two weeks longer, becauſe they were to ſee one another no more.† This is the conſtant tradition of the Jews; and their preſent practice is agreeable to it.‡ Whoever peruſes attentively the Song of Solomon, will find ſeven days marked out to repreſent the firſt week of his nuptials.

In the ſame Song may be ſeen the acquaintances of the Bride-groom, and the companions of the Bride, whoſe preſence was another part of the feſtival ſolemnity; for the Bride-groom had young men to rejoice with him, and the Bride had young women. Thus Sampſon had thirty companions given him.§ The Goſpel alſo ſpeaks of the friends of the Bride-groom, and of the young women that go out to meet the Bride-groom and the Bride.‖ The Bride-groom wore a crown in token of joy; and the tradition of the Jews gives one to the Bride alſo.¶ They were conducted home to the ſound of muſical inſtruments, and their attendants held branches of myrtle and palm in their hands.**

But, I do not find their marriages accompanied with any religious ceremony, except the prayers of the Father of the family, and of thoſe who were preſent, to draw down the bleſſing of God on the married couple.

* Jud. xiv. 12. &c. † Tob. viii. 23. ‡ Cod. Thalm. Pirke Aboth. c. 16. Selden ux. Heb. l. 2. c. 3. Buxt. ſynag. Jud. c. 28. § Jud. xiv. 11. ‖ Matt. ix. 15. Ib. xxv.—Cant. iii. 11. Iſ. lxi. 10. ¶ Pirke Aboth. c. 16. Selden c. 15. ** Ib.

We

We have inſtances of this in the marriage of Rebecca with Iſaac,* of Ruth with Booz, of Sarah with Tobias.† I do not find that any ſacrifice was offered on theſe occaſions, or that they went to the temple, or ſent for the Prieſts. And, in fact, marriage was as yet, only a civil contract.

The Circumciſion of their children was indeed an act of religion, and very neceſſary at that time for whoever was to enter into the covenant of Abraham: but this likewiſe was performed in private houſes, without the miniſtry of Prieſt or Levite. If any one of a public character was called in to perform this ceremony, it was ſome kind of a ſurgeon uſed to perform that operation, ſuch as the Jews have at preſent, whom they call *Moled*. With reſpect to all theſe ceremonies, we muſt take care not to be impoſed upon by modern paintings, as I before obſerved of their dreſs.

So far were the Iſraelites from fearing a great number of children, that it was what they earneſtly wiſhed for; and the Law itſelf furniſhed them with ſtrong motives for ſo doing, beſides the inclination of nature. They knew that God, at the creation of the world, and at the renewal thereof after the deluge, had ſaid to man: *Encreaſe and fill the earth*. They knew that he had promiſed Abraham an innumerable poſterity; and that, laſtly, from among them, ſhould be born the Saviour of the world. Nor were

* Gen. xxiv. 60. † Ruth iv. 11. Tob. vii. 15.

they

they preſſed with thoſe motives of ſordid intereſt, which now make the bleſſing of the married ſtate, that is, a numerous offspring, to be conſidered as a misfortune. In their frugal way of life, while the children were little, they were fed at a ſmall expence, and clothed at a leſs; for, in hot countries, they are often ſuffered to go naked. When they grew up, they helped their parents in their work, and ſaved the expence of ſlaves or hired ſervants. And indeed, comparatively ſpeaking, they had few ſlaves. Siba, Saul's ſervant, with his fifteen ſons and twenty ſlaves, cultivated Miphiboſeth's whole eſtate * They had no difficulty in providing for their children, becauſe they had no fortunes to raiſe for them; nor had they any other ambition, than to tranſmit to their deſcendants the ſame inheritance they had received from their Fathers, improved by cultivation, if poſſible, and with a ſomewhat larger ſtock of cattle upon it. As to the girls, ſince they only ſucceeded to the family eſtate, in failure of iſſue-male, they were more ſought for in marriage upon account of their family than for their riches.†

It was therefore an advantage to have a number of children: it was alſo an honour. He was looked upon as a happy man, who ſaw himſelf the Father of a large family, and ſurrounded with a great many children and grand-children,‡ always ready to receive his

* 2 Kings ix. 10. † Numb. xxvii. 8.

‡ Pſal. xxvii. 3. &c.

inſtructions,

inſtructions, and to execute his orders: and none of them feared his name being forgotten, while his poſterity ſhould ſubſiſt. *Childrens children are the crown of old-men*,* ſays the ſcripture: and whenever it takes notice of the number of children, it is uſually in commendation of the Fathers: as for inſtance, when it ſpeaks of the two Judges of Iſrael, one of whom had thirty ſons;† the other forty, beſides thirty grandſons:‡ or of David, nineteen of whoſe ſons are mentioned, beſides thoſe of his concubines:§ or of Roboam, who had twenty-eight ſons, and ſixty daughters;‖ or of Abia, who had twenty-two ſons and ſixteen daughters.¶ The Poets have in like manner boaſted of the fifty ſons of Priam; for the Greeks held fecundity in no leſs eſteem than did the Iſraelites. Virginity, taken as a virtue, was as yet very little known. It was conſidered in the ſame light as barrenneſs; and thoſe young women, who died unmarried, were looked upon as unfortunate. Electra, in Sophocles, bemoans herſelf in expreſs terms on that account; and it was for the ſame reaſon that the daughter of Jephta bewails herſelf.** Hence ſterility brought a reproach on a married woman, as we ſee in the mother of Samuel, and many others:†† this misfortune was conſidered as a curſe from God.

On this anxious deſire of poſterity was

* Prov. xvii. 6. † Judg. x. 4. ‡ Ib. xii. 14. § 1 Chron. iii. 1.—10 ‖ 2 Chron. xi. 21. ¶ Ibid. xiii. 21. ** Jud. xi. 38. †† 1 Kings i.

grounded the law, which ordered the brother to marry his brother's Widow, when the brother had died without iſſue. A law eſtabliſhed from the time of the Patriarchs, as appears from the hiſtory of Thamar;* and conſidered as a duty of piety, that the name of the deceaſed might not be forgotten:† wherefore the children were called his by a ſort of adoption. Hence the two different Genealogies, according to St Matthew, and according to St Luke;‡ for thus St Joſeph had two fathers, the one by birth, the other by this legal adoption. Nor was marrying thus with a ſiſter-in-law, contrary to the primitive law of nature, which permitted marriage with an own ſiſter, before God had forbidden it

It was this deſire of having a great many children, that induced the Iſraelites to take ſeveral wives at the ſame time: they alſo looked upon it as an honour and a mark of grandeur. Thus Iſaias, to ſhew in what eſteem thoſe would be held, whom God ſhould preſerve amidſt his people, ſays that ſeven women would come to one man, offering to maintain themſelves, provided they might be allowed the honour of bearing his name.§ Thus it is ſaid that Roboam had eighteen wives, and threeſcore concubines;‖ and that he gave ſeveral wives to his ſon Abia, whom he had choſen for his ſucceſſor.¶

* Gen. xxxviii. 8. † Deut. xxv. 6i ‡ Matt. i. Luke iii.—Aug. de Conſ. Evang. § Iſ. iv. 1. ‖ 2 Chron. xi. 21. ¶ Ib. xxiii.

Not-

Notwithſtanding this, they were ſufficiently temperate in the uſe of marriage. They refrained therefrom, not only while their wives were pregnant, or laboured under the diſorders peculiar to the ſex, but alſo during the whole time they gave ſuck; that is for the ſpace of two or three years: and the mothers did not often diſpenſe with themſelves from nurſing their children. I only find three nurſes mentioned in the ſcripture, thoſe of Rebecca, Miphiboſeth, and Joas King of Juda.*

We muſt not, therefore, be ſurprized, that God ſhould tolerate polygamy, which had been introduced before the deluge†, although contrary to the primitive inſtitution of marriage. For when it was inſtituted in the terreſtrial paradiſe, there was, as yet, no concupiſcence in human nature: and ſince it has been raiſed, in the new law, to the dignity of a ſacrament, it is accompanied with very powerful graces. But, in the intermediate time, when grace was much leſs, and ſin reigned, it was becoming the goodneſs of God to uſe more indulgence. Polygamy was like divorce, which JESUS-CHRIST told the Jews had only been tolerated among them on account of the hardneſs of their hearts.‡

Beſides their wives, they were alſo allowed concubines, who generally were ſlaves. The lawful wives had no other advantage

* Gen. xxiv. 59.—2 Kings iv. 4.—Ibid. xi. 12.

† Gen. iv. 19. ‡ Matt. xix. 8.

over them, but the dignity that rendered their children heirs of the inheritance. So that the name of *Concubine* did not ſignify a ſtate of debauchery, as it does among us, but only a leſs ſolemn marriage.

After all, this liberty was ſo far from rendering the married ſtate more eaſy, that it added very much to the weight of its yoke. A huſband could not divide his heart ſo equally among his wives as to pleaſe them all. He was obliged to govern them like a deſpot, as the huſbands, in eaſtern parts of the world, do to this day; ſo that there was no longer any equality, friendſhip or ſociety in marriage. It was ſtill more difficult for the rival wives to agree among themſelves; there was no end of diviſions, cabals and domeſtic ſtrife. Every woman's children had as many ſtep-mothers, as the Father had wives: each child eſpouſed the intereſt of his own mother, and looked upon the children of the other wives in no other light, than that of ſtrangers or enemies. Hence the expreſſion ſo often repeated in ſcripture: *He is my brother, and the ſon of my own mother.* We find inſtances of theſe diviſions in the family of David; and ſtill more dreadful ones in that of Herod.

The liberty of ſeparating by divorce was likewiſe attended with very diſagreeable conſequences. An engagement was more raſhly entered upon; leſs pains were taken to pleaſe each other; and the number of marriages might go to ſuch an exceſs, as to become only a life of palliated debauchery.

We

We know to what a length things were carried in this point at Rome, after the fall of the Republic; whereas, while good manners subsisted there, that is to say, to the year five hundred and fifty-three from the building of the city, there was not a single instance of a divorce, though permitted by the laws.* The children also were great sufferers thereby: they became orphans while their father and mother were living; and it was very difficult for them not to become an object of hatred to the one or to the other; or not to take part with the one or the other in their domestic broils.

§ XV.—EDUCATION of CHILDREN. EXERCISES. STUDIES.

THE education of children seems to have been much the same amongst the Israelites, as it was among the Egyptians and the ancient Greeks. They formed their bodies by labour and exercise, and their minds by literature and music.† Strength of body they held in great esteem; and it is the most general commendation the scripture gives to the military; as for instance to the valiant men of David.‡ Foot-racing must likewise have been one of their principal exercises, since they could distinguish one man from another, at a distance, by his running; as for instance, those who brought the news of

* Aul. Gell. l. 4. c. 3. † See Plato Rep. 2 and 3.
‡ 1 Chron. xii. 8.

Abſalom's defeat.* Theſe men muſt often have been ſeen running. It is ſaid of Aſael, the brother of Joab, that he run like a roe-buck.† The Prophet Zacharias ſpeaks of a heavy ſtone, which St Jerome takes to be one of thoſe, which ſerved for a trial of ſtrength, to ſee who could lift it higheſt :‡ ſo that there is room to believe that this alſo was one of their exerciſes. The example of Jonathan ſhews that ſhooting with bows and arrows was likewiſe another.§

But theſe bodily exerciſes were never made an occupation of importance, as they were among the Greeks, who reduced them to an art, and ſought therein the higheſt refinements. They called this art *Gymnaſtic*, becauſe they exerciſed it naked; and the places where they exerciſed, they called *Gymnaſiums*, which wery very ſpacious and magnificent, erected and built at a great expence.‖ Here it was that ſome choice maſters, with a number of aſſiſtants under them, formed the bodies of young men by a very exact regimen, and moderate exerciſes. Some took ſo much pleaſure therein, that they made theſe exerciſes their employment for life, and continued profeſſional Athletes. They acquired immenſe ſtrength, and formed to themſelves bodies ſuch as thoſe, which ſerved as models for the fineſt ſtatues. But in all other reſpects they became brutiſh and incapable of any applica-

* 2 Kings xviii. 23. † Ibid. ii. 18. ‡ Zach. xii. 3.
§ 1 Kings xx. 20. ‖ See Hier. Mercurial. de Arte Gymnaſt.

tion

tion of mind. They were not even fit for war, or any undertaking, that would deprive them of their food and reſt, or interfered in the leaſt with their regular courſe of life. The Hebrews were of too ſerious a turn of mind to give into theſe idle curioſities: and it was an odious novelty, when a Gymnaſium was built at Jeruſalem, after the manner of the Greeks, under Antiochus the Illuſtrious.* They contented themſelves with the labours of huſbandry, and ſome military exerciſes like the Romans.

Nor did they ſtand in need of extenſive ſtudies to form their minds, if by *ſtudies* we mean the knowledge of different languages, or the reading of many books, as the word is commonly underſtood. For they deſpiſed the ſtudy of foreign languages, as being uſed equally by ſlaves and people of rank.† They were content with their own native tongue, and that was the Hebrew, ſuch as we ſee it in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament. It is characteriſtic of their manners: the words of it are ſimple, all derived from a ſmall number of roots, and quite uncompounded. It has a ſurpriſing richneſs in its verbs, the greateſt part of which expreſs entire phraſes. *To be great, to make great, to be made great,* are all ſimple words, which no tranſlation can perfectly expreſs. Moſt of the prepoſitions and pronouns are only ſingle letters prefixed or ſubjoined to words. It is the moſt conciſe lan-

* 1 Macc. i. 15.—Ib. 2. iv. 12. † Joſ. Ant. 20.

guage

guage known, and conſequently approaches neareſt to the language of ſpirits, who ſtand not in need of words to be underſtood. The expreſſions are neat and ſtrong, and afford diſtinct and ſenſible ideas: nothing is more remote from bombaſt or an unmeaning ſound.

The genius of this language is to make the propoſitions follow one another, without ſuſpending the ſenſe, or embarraſſing the reader in long periods, which renders the ſtyle exceedingly clear. Hence, in narrations, they always make thoſe they introduce, ſpeak directly in their own perſons, nor are they afraid of repetitions: above all they are careful to expreſs the ſame thing in the ſame words. This is what, at firſt ſight, makes us look upon the ſtyle of the ſcripture as flat and vulgar; but, in reality, it is a mark of the good ſenſe, ſolidity, and the clearneſs of underſtanding of thoſe, who ſpoke in that manner. Though the ſtyle of the ſacred books be very different, we do not ſee that the language ever changed from the time of Moſes to the captivity of Babylon.

All their Grammar, therefore, like that of the ancient Greeks, conſiſted only in ſpeaking well their own language, reading and writing it correctly; with this difference, that it does not appear that they ever reduced it into an art, or learnt it by rules. Their letters were what we now call Samaritan, becauſe the Samaritans have preſerved them: and as they are neither flowing nor eaſy to form, there is reaſon to doubt if, among

mong the Iſraelites, it was a very common thing to know how to write; the more ſo, becauſe the learned are called, in ſcripture, *Sopherim*, that is to ſay Scribes, or Writers, according to the ancient tranſlations; and indeed huſbandmen ſtand in leſs need of writing, than tradeſmen or people in buſineſs. But it is probable that the greateſt part could read, ſince it was recommended to all to learn the law of God, and to meditate on it day and night:* and this ſtudy was their whole employment on the Sabbath-day.

This book alone was ſufficient to inſtruct them completely. They found therein the hiſtory of the world to the time of their being ſettled in the land of promiſe; the origin of all the nations known to them, and more particularly of thoſe, with whom it concerned them to be beſt acquainted; ſuch as the deſcendants of Lot, of Abraham, of Iſmael and of Eſau. They found in the ſame book the whole of their religion, its doctrines, ceremonies, precepts of morality, and even their civil law. Thus this book alone, which is the *Pentateuch*, or the five books of Moſes, contained every thing that was neceſſary for them to know.

Not but that they had ſeveral other books: for, not to mention the books of Joſue, Judges, Samuel, and other ſacred books, which were wrote afterwards; even in the time of Moſes mention is made of the *Book of*

* Deut. vi. 6, 7, &c. Joſ. c. cont. ſyop. 6. Prig. in Cels. L. 4.

the

the wars of the Lord;* and in another place of the *Book of the Juſt or Righteous*.† The books of Kings often refer to ſome Chronicles of the Kings of Juda and Iſrael. Solomon wrote three thouſand parables, and a thouſand poems or canticles.‡ He wrote treatiſes on all ſorts of plants and animals;§ and he himſelf complains that there was no end of making books.‖ All theſe books, and perhaps many others, of which we know nothing, are loſt like thoſe of the Egyptians, Syrians, and other Orientals. The only books of that antiquity which remain, are ſuch as God dictated to his Prophets, and which he has preſerved by a particular providence.

It is not probable that the Iſraelites ever ſtudied the books of ſtrangers, all intercourſe with whom they ſo carefully avoided: and this kind of ſtudy would have been dangerous to them, as they would thereby have learnt the impious and ſenſeleſs fables, which made up the whole Theology of the Idolaters. Now this they held in ſuch abhorrence, at leaſt the virtuous amongſt them, that they would not even pronounce the names of the falſe Gods:§ and if they were joined to any proper names, they changed them into others. Thus they ſaid Iſboſeth and Miphiboſeth inſtead of Eſbaal and Meribbaal; Bethhaven inſtead of Bethel; Beelſebub inſtead of Beelſemem.¶ Theſe fables, which

* Numb. xxi. 14. † Joſue x. 13. 2 Kings i. 18.
‡ 3 Kings iv. 32. § Ib. ‖ Eccleſ. xii. 12. ¶ Iſ. xv. 4. Wiſd. xiv. 27. ** 1 Chron. viii. 33, 34.

con-

contained the whole doctrine of the falſe religions, were a heap of lies accumulated by a long tradition, grounded on ſome ancient truths, and embelliſhed by the invention of the Poets. Mothers and Nurſes taught them the children from their cradle, and they were ſung in their public ceremonies and entertainments. The wiſeſt amongſt the heathens ſaw very well that all theſe fables tended only to the contempt of the Deity, and to the corruption of morals; but the diſeaſe was paſt remedy.*

The Iſraelites were the only people among whom the children were taught nothing but truths, proper to inſpire them with the fear and love of God, and to excite them to the practice of virtue: all their traditions were noble and uſeful. Not but that, beſides plain and ſimple narratives, they employed likewiſe parables and riddles to teach ſuch truths as were of importance, and particularly with regard to morality. It was a common exerciſe among perſons of wit, to propoſe riddles to one another, as we ſee in the inſtances of Sampſon,† and of the Queen of Saba.‡ The Greeks tell us the ſame thing of their firſt ſages:§ They alſo made uſe of fables like thoſe of Æſop, the fiction of which is ſo evident, as to deceive nobody. We have two ſuch in ſcripture, that of Joatham the ſon of Gedeon,‖ and that of Joas King of Iſrael.¶ But the chief uſe of

* Plato Rep. 2 in fine, and init. 3. † Jud. xiv. 14.
‡ 3 Kings x. 1. § Plutarch. ſept. ſap. ‖ Jud. ix. 8.
¶ 4 Kings xiv. 9.

Alle-

allegories and figurative diſcourſes was to couch the maxims of morality under agreeable images, and in few words, that children might retain them more eaſily: and ſuch are the Parables or Proverbs of which the ſapiental books are collections.

Theſe parables were commonly expreſſed in verſe, and the verſes were made to be ſung; I therefore imagine that the Iſraelites alſo learnt muſic. I judge of them by the Greeks, who received all their ſtudies, as well as their politeneſs, from the Orientals. Now it is certain the Greeks taught all their children to ſing and play on inſtruments. This is the moſt ancient of all ſtudies. Before the uſe of letters the memory of all great events was performed by ſongs. Such was the practice of the Gauls and Germans in the time of the Romans: and the ſame cuſtom is ſtill kept up among the people of America.

Although the Hebrews had letters, they knew that words in meaſure, and ſet to muſic, are more eaſily retained: and hence proceeded the great care they took to compoſe canticles on occaſion of every conſiderable event that happened to them. Such are the two made by Moſes, the one at the paſſage of the Red Sea,* the other at his death, to recommend the keeping of the law.† Such is the canticle of Debora,‡ that of the mother of Samuel,‖ and ſo many others: and above all the Pſalms of David. Theſe pie-

* Exod. xv. † Deut. xxxii. ‡ Jud. v. § 1 Kings ii. ces

ces of Poetry are wonderfully inſtructive; they are full of the praiſes of God, the memory of his benefits, precepts of morality, and of all the ſentiments that a virtuous man ought to have in every ſituation of life. By this means the moſt important truths, and the moſt upright ſentiments entered agreeably the minds of the children, together with the words and tune.

Such was the lawful uſe of muſic and poetry. God, who is the author of all fine natural talents and agreeable voices, deſigned, without doubt, that they ſhould be employed to give a taſte and reliſh to what is good, and not to foment criminal paſſions. The Greeks themſelves have acknowledged, that the moſt ancient and beſt ſort of poetry was the Lyric, that is to ſay, Hymns and Odes in praiſe of the Deity, and calculated to inſpire virtue.* Dramatic Poetry, which conſiſts in imitation alone, and whoſe only end is to afford diverſion, by moving the paſſions, was a more modern invention. We find therefore nothing of it among the Hebrews; and although Solomon, in his Song, introduces every where different perſonages ſpeaking, it is rather to expreſs their ſentiments in a lively manner, than to repreſent any action, as in theatrical pieces.

We have no remains of the muſic of the Hebrews, nor of the ſtructure of their verſes: but if we were to judge of the beauty of their vocal muſic by that of the words em-

* Plato Leg. 3.

ployed in it, it must have been excellent, grave and solid, at the same time that it was moving and diversified. If we judge by the effects, the scripture seems to attribute to their music some that were supernatural. We see that it charmed evil spirits, in the instance of Saul, who found himself better, when David played on the harp.* We see that the sound of instruments aided the spirit of God, which agitated the Prophets, in the instance of those whom Saul met, according to the prediction of Samuel, and with whom he himself also entered into holy transports of joy.† And again in the instance of Eliseus, who asked for somebody who could play on an instrument, to the end he might prophecy.‡ The meaning of which is, that this music appeased the motion of the spirits and humours, which the Devil had disturbed in those whom God permitted him to agitate: and, on the other hand, when it found any hearts pure and calm, it elevated them towards God, and warmed them: thus disposing them better to receive the powerful impressions of his spirit. The Greeks likewise relate wonderful effects of their music, both in exciting and calming the passions; and we must either give the lie to all history, or acknowledge that the music of the ancients was affecting in a quite different manner from ours.

Not that music was rare or scarce amongst

* 1 Kings xvi. 23. † Ibid. x. 5, 6, &c. ‡ 4 Kings iii. 15.

them;

them; for they were all muſicians: and, to confine myſelf to the Hebrews, and to ſpeak only of thoſe, who were Muſicians by profeſſion, there were, in David's time, four thouſand Levites deſtined to that employment alone*; under the direction of two hundred and eighty-four maſters:† the chief of whom were Aſaph, Heman and Idithun,‡ ſo often mentioned in the inſcriptions of the Pſalms. David himſelf was a great Poet, and a great Muſician; and every one knows how much the inclination of Kings contributes to the advancement of the arts. They had a great diverſity of wind-inſtruments, ſuch as trumpets and flutes of different ſorts; drums alſo and ſtring-inſtruments, of which the two moſt frequently mentioned are the *Cinnor* and *Nebel*, of which the Greeks have formed their *Cinyra* and *Naba*. When we therefore give David a harp, it is only by conjecture we do it. They had inſtruments of eight or ten ſtrings.

Their ſinging was accompanied with dancing, for that is the meaning of the word *Chorus* or Choir, which the Latins borrowed from the Greeks, and ſignified, among the latter, a company of Dancers, all dreſſed alike and with the ſame ornaments. They ſang together and danced a ſort of brawl, being matched according to their age and ſex, young men, maids, wives, old men; all in ſeparate companies. Now we cannot imagine that the dances of the Hebrews

* 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. † Ibid. xxv. 7. ‡ Ib. x. 6.

were leſs modeſt. Choruſes or Dances are mentioned in the proceſſion which David made to transfer the ark to Sion*, and on ſeveral occaſions of victories gained, where it is ſaid that the young women came out of the cities dancing and ſinging.

I do not find that the Iſraelites had any public ſchools, or that young people left their parents houſes to go to ſtudy. Their laborious way of life would not admit it: their fathers ſtood in need of their aſſiſtance in their work, and brought them up to it from their infancy. And indeed the word *ſchool* in the Greek tongue ſignifies *leiſure*, as being the place, where ſuch aſſembled together who had no urgent buſineſs on their hands, and thought to amuſe themſelves in an honourable way. And the Latin word *ludus*, which ſignifies *play* or *diverſion*, conveys the ſame idea. I imagine therefore that the greateſt part of their ſtudies were performed without reading, or any ſet leſſons, by the converſation of their fathers and old men.

The fathers were obliged to inform their children of the great things God had done for them and their forefathers; and, for that purpoſe, the law ſo often commands them to explain to their children the meaning of the feſtivals and the other ceremonies of religion.† So that theſe inſtructions, joined to ſenſible objects, being ſo often repeated over and over again, could not fail making a ſolid and laſting impreſſion. They taught

* 2 Kings vi. 22. † Deut. vi. 7. 20.

them

them alſo whatever regards agriculture, joining continual practice to their leſſons; and no one will doubt of their great knowledge therein, if it be conſidered that they made it their only occupation for ſo many ages. Now, although this art of huſbandry amongſt us be followed by the illiterate and people of little reflection, it however includes a great extent of knowledge, of far more advantage to mankind, than that of the greateſt part of our ſpeculative gentry, who are eſteemed men of learning. And though we were to conſider as Science only what is written in books, both ancients and moderns have wrote enough on this ſubject, to give us a good opinion of it.

An Iſraelite, therefore, who by the tradition of his forefathers, his own experience, and ſome reading, was inſtructed in his religion, in the laws by which he was to regulate his conduct, and in the hiſtory of his own nation: one who knew how to procure for himſelf every thing neceſſary: one who perfectly underſtood the different qualities of ſoils, the plants proper for each, the method of managing them, and the proper ſeaſon for each: what precautions were to be taken againſt the accidents that deſtroy the fruits of the earth: how they were to be gathered in and preſerved: one who underſtood the nature of cattle, their food, their diſeaſes, the remedies thereof, and ſo many other things of the like nature, unknown, amongſt us, to the greateſt part of thoſe who call themſelves gentlemen or men of letters:

ſuch an honeſt Iſraelite as this, in my opinion, was full as valuable a man as one brought up in our Inns-of-court, Exchequer, or the wrangles of our ſchools. For, it muſt be owned, that, in theſe latter times, ſtudies purely curious have been too much ſeparated from ſuch as are really beneficial; and the care of the mind and of manners from that of buſineſs and health. The greateſt part of thoſe who cultivate their mind and memory, neglect their bodies too much, and are rendered unfit for actions of vigour and hard labour. Many even ſuffer themſelves to become ſo effeminate by their fondneſs for muſic, poetry and other ſtudies of mere curioſity, that with a great opinion of their fine parts and pretended merit, they lead a languid, and, in fact, a contemptible life.

There were, however, ſome of the Iſraelites, who applied themſelves particularly to ſtudy, and whom we may call men of learning, even according to our own ideas. It is ſaid that, in David's time, there were in the tribe of Iſſachar men *of underſtanding, that knew all times to order what Iſrael ſhould do** ; and interpreters think the meaning is, that they obſerved the ſtars, to regulate the feſtivals and the whole courſe of the year. The Prophet Malachy † ſays of the Prieſts in general, *that their lips ſhall keep knowledge, and that the people ſhould ſeek the law at their mouth.* One of their principal functions, therefore,

* 1 Chron. xii. 32. † Mal. ii. 7.

was

was to teach the law of God in the aſſemblies which were held in each town on the Sabbath-day, and which the Greeks called *Synagogues* or Churches, for both thoſe words in Greek ſignify very nearly the ſame.* Other learned men were likewiſe accuſtomed to ſpeak there, eſpecially ſuch as were known to be Prophets inſpired by God. Theſe were the public ſchools of the Iſraelites, in which were taught, not indeed the curious ſciences, but the truths of religion and good morals: and where, not children or a few individuals who had leiſure to attend, but the whole people were inſtructed.

The Prieſts and Prophets alone undertook the compoſing of books, particularly ſuch as were hiſtorical. The ſame was the practice of the Egyptians; their Prieſts renounced all worldly concerns. They led a very ſerious and retired life; their only occupation was the ſervice of the Gods, and the ſtudy of wiſdom.† They ſpent the day in the functions of religion, and the night in mathematical contemplations: for this was what they called the ſtudy of heavenly things—they alone wrote hiſtory. In the ſame manner the moſt ancient hiſtory of the Romans were the Annals of their Pontiffs.

In the hiſtories of ſacred ſcripture we ſee the characters of their Authors. They appear to have been men of a very ſerious and grave turn of mind; old men, of great experience in the world, and well informed of

* Orig. in Celſ. L. 4. † Joſeph. in App. L. 1. c. 2.

the

the ſubjects they wrote on. There appears nothing of vanity, flattery, or any affectation of diſplaying their talents: whereas we ſee all theſe defects in the Greeks, among whom every private man had the liberty of writing, and the greateſt part ſought only to promote their own glory and that of their country. The Hebrew hiſtorians do not preſix their names to their works, nor diſguiſe any thing that is to their own diſcredit, or that of the Princes or Princeſſes, who are the ſubjects of their hiſtories. Thoſe who wrote the hiſtory of David, have given us as circumſtantial a detail of his crime, as of any action of his life.

They neither make any preface nor tranſitions; there is nothing but facts, related in the cleareſt manner that is poſſible, without interſperſing either any reaſoning or reflections. But, if we examine them well, we ſhall find a ſurpriſing judgment in the choice of the facts that appertain to their ſubject, which makes their hiſtories very ſhort: although, in the important paſſages, they enter into the moſt minute particulars, and, by a lively narration, place the action before the reader's eyes. One may perceive that they purpoſely retrench all reflections and exaggerations, by their knowing well how to employ them in thoſe diſcourſes, where their aim is to move. Thus Moſes, in Deuteronomy, ſets off and amplifies, with the boldeſt and the grandeſt figures, what he had related in a very plain and ſimple manner in the foregoing books. Thus the Prophet

Iſaiah

Iſaias relates, in a plain, ſimple manner, the defeat of Sennacherib, after having foretold it in a ſtyle ſo elevated, as to be poetic.*

The Hebrews ſucceeded no leſs in other kinds of writing. The laws are written with perſpicuity and brevity: the maxims of morality are compriſed in ſhort ſentences, ſet off with pleaſing figures, and expreſſed in a meaſured ſtyle; for all this contributes towards their being better retained in the memory. Laſtly, their Poetry is ſublime: the deſcriptions are lively, the metaphors are bold, the expreſſions noble, the figures wonderfully diverſified. But it would require whole treatiſes to ſpeak of their eloquence and poetry as they deſerve.

Although they wrote by divine inſpiration, I do not think it neceſſary to attribute all their eloquence to that. Inſpiration hindered them from ſaying any thing that was not true, or making uſe of any word, which did not anſwer the deep deſigns of God: but, in other reſpects, the Holy Ghoſt made uſe of their natural way of expreſſing themſelves. This appears from the difference of ſtyle in the writings of the different Prophets; and, ſtill more, by the conformity there is between all of them and the moſt ancient profane authors. Homer, Herodotus and Hippocrates relate things in the ſame manner†. Heſiod's inſtructions are nearly the ſame. The Elegies of Theognis and Solon have a great reſemblance to the exhortations of Mo-

* Iſ. xxxvi. † Demoſth. de fals. leg. & alibi.

ſes

ſes and the Prophets: we ſee in Pindar and the choruſes of the tragedies the boldneſs and variety of the Canticles. The more ancient the Greek authors are, the more they reſemble the Hebrews, both in the difference of their ſtyles, according to the nature of their works, and the brevity and propriety of expreſſion.

Believe, who will, that the Hebrews wrote thus by the mere ſtrength or genius alone; and that the accuracy of their judgment made them reject whatever was not to the purpoſe of each particular work, and employ whatever was moſt proper to inform or to move. For my part, ſeeing they obſerve ſo conſtantly the difference of ſtyles, and make ſo proper an uſe, on every occaſion, of all the embelliſhments of true eloquence, I am apt to believe they had, already, ſome rules taken from the experience of their fathers, either in writing, or only by tradition amongſt the learned. Do not let us imagine that the Greeks invented Eloquence and Poetry: the moſt they invented, was the names of the figures, and all that artificial language, or the technical terms, which conſtituted the knowledge of the Grammarians and Rhetoricians; but which never made either Orators or Poets. The grounds of the art were found out before their time: and indeed the world was then pretty old. It had laſted three thouſand years before Solomon, and wants above three hundred years of having laſted ſo long ſince his time.* Until that time, the

* The Author wrote this work in the year 1682.

life

life of men had been long, and there had been no inundations of Barbarians in thoſe countries where the arts and ſciences had begun.

§ XVI.—The Politeneſs of the Israelites.

TO return to the commonalty of the Hebrews; ſo well inſtructed as they were, and born in a country where men have naturally good parts, they could not be wanting in politeneſs. For we are not to imagine that politeneſs of manners is incompatible with a country life and bodily labour: the example of the Greeks proves the contrary too well. I take *Politeneſs* here for whatever diſtinguiſhes us from the barbarian nations; on one hand, humanity and civility, the demonſtrations of friendſhip and reſpect in the intercourſe of life: and on the other hand, prudence in the management of buſineſs, addreſs, delicacy of conduct, and whatever we call *Policy*.

As to what regards *Civility*, the Greeks, for the moſt part, living under a republican government, were ſo jealous of their liberty, that they all treated one another as equals; and their compliments went no farther than to ſignify eſteem and friendſhip, in which the Romans imitated them. The civilities of the Orientals came nigher to ours, and expreſſed more reſpect. They gave the appellation of *Lord* to thoſe whom they had a mind to honour: they made proteſtations of ſervice

ſervice to them; bowed down before them, and even lay proſtrate on the ground, which the ſcripture calls *Adoring*.

This was the practice of the Hebrews even before they had kings, and in the time of the Patriarchs: which they probably had borrowed from the manners of the neighbouring people, who, from a long time, had been ſubject to maſters. It was no incivility to *Thou* one another: all antiquity ſpoke in the ſame manner, as moſt nations of the whole world do ſtill. It was only about the fall of the Roman Empire that the ſpeaking to one perſon in the plural number began. The common ſalute was a kiſs. Whereas we take off our hats to ſhew reſpect, they put off their ſhoes to go into any holy place, as many of the Orientals ſtill do. On the other hand, to uncover the head was a mark of mourning.

We ſee ſome examples of their compliments in thoſe of Ruth*, Abigail†, and the woman of Thecua, whom Joab employed to get Abſalom recalled‡; and of Judith§. All theſe examples are taken from women, who are generally more flattering than men. They took a pleaſure in making uſe of allegories, and ingenious riddles, in their diſcourſe. Their language was modeſt and agreeable to decency, but in a different manner from ours. They ſaid, the *water of the feet*, to expreſs urine; to expreſs the ſatisfy-

* Ruth ii. 10, &c. † 1 Kings xxv. 23. 41.
‡ 2 Kingt xiv. 9.—17. § Judith xi. 5, 6.

ing

ing other neceſſities of nature, they uſed the phraſe of *covering the feet;* becauſe in that action, after digging a hole in the ground, they covered themſelves with their clokes.* They named the *Thigh* inſtead of the parts adjoining, which modeſty forbids naming. On the other hand, they uſe expreſſions which appear to us highly indelicate, when they ſpeak of the conception and birth of children, of the fruitfulneſs or barrenneſs of women: and they mention in plain terms certain ſecret infirmities of both ſexes, which we expreſs in diſtant circumlocutions.

All theſe differences proceed only from the diſtance of times and places. The generality of words, which are indecent according to our preſent way of ſpeaking, were formerly decent, becauſe they conveyed different ideas: and even at preſent the people of the Levant, and eſpecially the Mahometans, are ridiculouſly nice in ſome branches of uncleanneſs, which no way appertain to manners, while they grant themſelves the greateſt liberty in the moſt infamous pleaſures. The books of ſcripture ſpeak more freely, than we ſhould do, on the ſubject of the connubial intercourſe, between the married couple, becauſe none among the Iſraelites renounced that ſtate; and becauſe their writers were men of great gravity, and, generally ſpeaking, advanced in years.

As to prudence, policy good or evil, addreſs, artifice, cunning, court-intrigues, the

* Deut. xxiii. 12.

hiſtory of Saul and that of David, furniſh as many inſtances, in proportion, as any I know of.

§ XVII.—Their PLEASURES and DIVERSIONS.

THEIR eaſy and quiet mode of life, joined to the beauty of the country, naturally inclined them to pleaſure. But their pleaſures were ſenſible and eaſily procured: they ſcarce had any others beſides good Cheer and Muſic. Their entertainments, as I obſerved before, conſiſted of plain meats, which they took from their own ſtock; and their muſic coſt them ſtill leſs, ſince the greateſt part of them could ſing and play on inſtruments. Old Berzellai only reckoned theſe two ſorts of pleaſures, when he ſaid, that he was too old to reliſh life:* and the Author of *Eccleſiaſticus* compares theſe two pleaſures, united, to a Carbuncle ſet in gold.† In the ſame manner Ulyſſes, when with the Pheacians, frankly acknowledges that he knew no other happineſs in life, than a banquet with muſic. We ſee the ſame pleaſures mentioned by the Prophets, in the reproaches they make thoſe who abuſed them.‡ But the Prophets add thereto exceſs of wine, garlands of flowers and perfumes, as we ſee was the practice of the Greeks and Romans.

* 2 Kings xix. 35. † Eccl.. xxxii. 7. ‡ Amos vi. 5, &. Iſ. v. 11, 12.

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An enumeration of the perfumes in uſe among the Hebrews, may be found in the Song of Solomon, and in ſeveral other places of ſcripture: but eſpecially in the Law, where it preſcribes the two ſorts of perfumes which were to be offered to God, the one dry, the other liquid * The drugs there ſpecified, are of the moſt odoriferous kinds known, before Muſk and Ambergris were diſcovered.

They delighted to eat in gardens under the trees, and in arbours; for it is natural in hot countries to ſeek the cool and freſh air. Thus when the ſcripture would expreſs a time of proſperity, it ſays that each man eat and drank under his own vine and fig-tree, which are fruit-trees whoſe leaves are of the largeſt ſize.

Their application to huſbandry did not permit them to make feaſts or entertainments every day, or every day to follow their pleaſures, like the greateſt part of our rich ones at preſent; but they reliſhed them the more, when they did enjoy them. They had therefore their ſtated times for mirth and rejoicings, viz. the Sabbath-days, and all the other feſtivals mentioned in the Law: as alſo Nuptials: the ſharing the booty after a victory: † their ſheep-ſhearings: harveſt and vintage ‡ in each particular territory, where neighbours met together to aſſiſt one another. It is well known that the Feaſts of Bacchus and Ceres among the Greeks

* Exod. xxx 23, &c. † Iſ. ix. 3. ‡ Ibid. xiv. 10.

took their riſe from theſe ſorts of merry-making, and we ſtill find footſteps of them amongſt the country-people. The Iſraelites had no profane ſhews or ſpectacles on theſe occaſions; they were ſatisfied with the ceremonies of Religion, and the pomp of the ſacrifices; which muſt have been very grand and magnificent, ſince the Temple was the moſt ſuperb building in the whole country, and thirty-two thouſand Levites were appointed to ſerve therein.

I find neither gaming nor hunting amongſt them; which with us are reckoned amongſt the greateſt diverſions. As for gaming or play, it ſeems as if they were intirely ſtrangers to it, ſince the very name of it is not once found in all the ſcripture. Not but that the Lydians had already invented games, if what is ſaid of them be true;* but even to this day the Arabians and other Orientals never play at any games of hazard; at leaſt when they obſerve their law. As to hunting either beaſts or birds, it was not unknown to the Iſraelites; but they appear to have followed it leſs as a diverſion, than as a means of furniſhing their tables, and preſerving their corn and vines. For they often ſpeak of nets and ſnares; but we do not find that even their Kings kept dogs or any equipage for the chace. They would, without doubt, have rendered themſelves odious to the people, if they had taken it into their heads to run over ploughed lands, or, to breed beaſts

* Herod. ii.

to

to ſpoil them. The great hunts began in the vaſt foreſts and uncultivated lands of the cold countries.

§ XVIII.—Their Mourning.

NEXT to their rejoicings and merriments, let us ſpeak of their mourning and marks of affliction. The Ancients went into mourning not only on occaſion of the death of a relation, but whenever any misfortune befell them; and their mourning conſiſted in ſomething more than a mere change of dreſs. The cauſes of mourning were either public calamities, ſuch as a mortality, a general ſcarcity, an invaſion of an enemy: or ſome private misfortune, ſuch as the death of a relation or friend; or if he was dangerouſly ſick, or carried into captivity; or if a perſon was accuſed of a crime.

The tokens of mourning, among the Iſraelites, was the tearing of their clothes upon hearing any bad news, or being preſent when any thing very wicked was done, as when they heard a perſon blaſpheme, or ſaw any crime committed againſt God.* Other marks of mourning were ſtriking the breaſt, putting their hands upon their heads, going bare-headed by taking off their head-dreſs, and throwing duſt or aſhes on their heads inſtead of perfuming them, as they did on joyful occaſions: as alſo ſhaving their

* 2 Kings xiii. 19. Jer. ii. 37.

beards and heads. The Romans, on the contrary, being accuſtomed to ſhave, let their beards and hair grow when they mourned.

While the time of mourning laſted, they were not either to anoint or to waſh themſelves, but to wear clothes that were dirty or tattered, or ſack-cloth, that is to ſay, ſtraight clothes without plaits or folds, and conſequently unſightly. Theſe were ſometimes called *hair-cloth*, becauſe they were made of coarſe Camlet, or ſome ſuch-like hard and rough ſtuff. They went barefoot, as well as bareheaded, but their faces were covered. Sometimes they muffled themſelves up in their clokes, not to ſee the light and to hide their tears.* Faſting accompanied their mourning, that is to ſay, while this laſted they either eat nothing at all, or not till after ſunſet; and then they took only the moſt ordinary food, ſuch as bread, or pulſe, and drank nothing but water.

They continued ſhut up at home, ſitting on the ground, or lying on aſhes, in profound ſilence, not opening their mouths but to vent moans, or to ſing ſome plaintive ſtrains.† Their mourning for the death of a perſon commonly laſted ſeven days.‡ Sometimes it was continued for a month, as for Aaron and Moſes;§ and ſometimes for the ſpace of ſeventy days, as in Egypt for the Patriarch Jacob.‖ But ſome Widows continued their

* Ezech. xxiv. 17. † Lament. ii. 10. ‡ 1 Kings xxxi. 13. Eccleſ. xxii. 13. § Numb. xx. 30. Deut. xxxiv. 8. ‖ Gen. l. 3.

mourning

mourning during life, as Judith and Anne the Propheteſs.

Thus their mourning was not like ours, a mere ceremony, which only the rich go through in a regular form; but it included all the natural effects of real grief. For a perſon who is really under affliction, pays no attention to dreſs or cleanlineſs; he can ſcarce prevail on himſelf to eat. He either does not ſpeak at all, or it is only to bemoan himſelf: he does not go abroad, and avoids all diverſions and amuſements. We find this method of mourning not only among the Iſraelites, and amongſt the other nations of the Eaſt, but alſo amongſt the Greeks and Romans; and that for a long time after; ſince St Chryſoſtome gives us almoſt the ſame deſcription of mourning in his time.* I eaſily believe there might be ſome who acted a farce in all this, and went through the whole ceremony without much real grief; but, at leaſt, thoſe who were really affected, had full liberty to indulge their grief.

Now, in general, the Iſraelites and all the ancients acted in a more natural manner than we do, and laid themſelves under leſs reſtraint in all the exterior demonſtrations of the paſſions. They ſang and danced when merry: they wept and groaned aloud in grief: when they were afraid, they frankly owned it: when they were angry, they called one another names. Homer and

* De Compunct. ad Demetr.

the

the Tragic Poets every where furniſh us with inſtances of this. See the lamentations of Achilles for the death of Patroclus, and in Sophocles the plaintive expreſſions of Œdipus and Philocletes. Philoſophy, and afterwards Chriſtianity, have corrected this outward diſplay of the paſſions in perſons of education and good-breeding: they are trained from their youth to ſpeak like Heroes or Saints; but the greateſt part are not a bit the better for it, at the bottom, and content themſelves with diſguiſing their paſſions, without conquering them, or even ſtriving againſt them.

§ XIX.—Their FUNERALS.

THEIR funerals will come in very well with their mourning. All the Ancients took very great care about them, and looked upon it as a moſt dreadful curſe, to have their own bodies, or the bodies of thoſe they had tenderly loved, remain expoſed to be devoured by wild beaſts or the birds of the air; or to rot above ground, and infect the living. It was a conſolation to reſt in the ſepulchres of their Fathers. Whereas the Greeks burnt the bodies to preſerve the aſhes; the Hebrews buried the common people in the ground, and embalmed perſons of diſtinction to depoſit them in ſepulchres. They alſo ſometimes burnt perfumes over the corpſe. At the funeral of Aſa King of Juda, it is ſaid, that he was laid on a bed filled with a compoſition of exquiſite perfumes, which

which they burnt in great plenty:* and it appears from other paſſages that this was a cuſtomary practice.† They embalmed the bodies in much the ſame manner as the Egyptians did, by wrapping them in large quantities of deſiccatory ſpices; they then placed them in ſepulchres, which were ſmall vaults or cloſets cut in rocks with ſuch art, that ſome had doors to ſhut, turning on their hinges, all cut out of the ſame rock. Some of them are to be ſeen even at this day: and each had a table of the ſame rock to lay the body on.

Thoſe who attended the funeral were in mourning, and made loud lamentations, as we ſee at the funeral of Abner.‡ There were women who made a trade of weeping and crying on theſe occaſions,§ and the mournful ſound of flutes was joined to their voices.‖ In a word, they compoſed Canticles to ſerve as funeral orations for perſons of high rank who came to an unfortunate death. Such was that which David made for Saul, and that of the prophet Jeremias for Joſias.¶

Although funerals were a duty of piety, they were not accompanied with any religious ceremony: on the contrary, the attending them was a profane action, and rendered all thoſe unclean who had any thing to do at them, till they were purified; becauſe dead bodies are either actually in a

* 2 Chron. xvi. 14. † Ibid. xxi. 19. Jer. xxxiv. 5.
‡ 2 Kings iii. 31. § Jer. ix. 17. ‖ Matt. ix. 23.
¶ 2 Kings i. 17. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

ſtate

ſtate of putrefaction, or tending immediately to it. So that Prieſts were ſo far from being neceſſary at funerals, that they were forbid to attend any, except thoſe of their near relations.* When Joſias undertook to aboliſh Idolatry, in order to give a greater horror of it, he ordered the bones of the falſe Prieſts to be burnt on the altars of the Idols.†

Sacrifices were offered for the Dead, that is to ſay, for the remiſſion of their ſins, as we ſee Judas Machabeus did :‡ and the Baptiſm for the dead, of which St Paul ſpeaks, was ſome ceremony of bathing and purification, which was conſidered as of advantage to the Dead, as well as prayers.§

* Lev. xxii. 2, 3. † 2 Chron. xxxiv. 5.
‡ 2 Mach. xii. 42.

§ There would be nothing ambiguous in the expreſſion of the Apoſtle, (1 Cor. xv. 29.) had the Interpreters attended to the univerſal practice of believers as well as unbelievers, who always *purified* themſelves with water before they offered ſacrifice. To be *baptiſed*, therefore, or to be *purified*, or *ſanctified*, expreſſed a ſeries of actions, of which this *purification* was the firſt, and moſt indiſpenſable, viz. the preparing, the ſlaying and partaking of the victim; ſo that to be baptiſed or *purified for the dead*, means neither more nor leſs than *offering ſacrifice* for the dead. It is a manner of expreſſing the action of ſacrifice not only uſual in ſcripture, but in prophane authors. Hence Virgil's: *Luſtramurque Jovi. Æneid. B.* 3. 279, to expreſs the whole detail of the ſacrifice;—St Paul evidently alludes to 2 Mach. xii. 42. and proves the truth of the reſurrection by the ſame way of reaſoning that Author employs. This primordial practice of purifying before ſacrifice is found among the Jews, in the *brazen Sea* being placed in the tabernacle and temple, *the fountains* in the court before the ancient Churches of the primitive Chriſtians, and in the holy *water-pots* placed at the entrance of all Catholic Churches to this day. *See Pluche. Spect.' de la Nature, Vol.* viii.

§ XX.

§ XX.—RELIGION.

WHAT has hitherto been ſaid regards the private life of the Iſraelites: let us now come to their Religion, and political ſtate. As to their Religion, I need not enlarge on the articles of their faith: we ought to know it, ſince it is compriſed in our own. I ſhall only obſerve, that ſome truths were clearly revealed to them, while the knowledge of others was as yet obſcure, though already revealed.*

What they had a diſtinct knowledge of was this: that there is only one God:† that he created heaven and earth:‡ that he governs all things by his providence:§ that no confidence is to be placed in any but in him, and no good to be hoped for, but from him alone:‖ that he ſees all things, even the ſecrets of hearts:¶ that he inwardly moves and turns the wills of men as he pleaſes:** that all men are born in ſin, and naturally inclined to evil:†† that however they can do good with the aſſiſtance of God:‡‡ that they are free, and have it in their choice to do good or evil:§§ that God is juſt, and puniſhes and rewards according to merit:‖‖ that he is full of mercy, and pardons thoſe, who have a ſincere ſorrow for their ſins:¶¶

* Joſ. cont. App. ii. c. 8. † Deut. iv. 39. vi. 4. ‡ Gen. i. 1. § Pſ. ciii. cxvi. ‖ Ibid. lxi. lxx. Iſ. xxxvi. Jer. xvii. ¶ Pſ. cxxxviii. 2 Kings viii. 39. ** 1 Kings x. 9. Prov. xxi. 1. †† Pſ. i. 7. Gen. vi. 5. Pſ. lii. 4. ‡‡ Deut. xxx. 6. Ez. xxxvi. 27. §§ Deut. xxx. 19, 20. Pſ. xvii. 25, &c. Ibid. lxi. 12. ‖‖ Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, &c.

that

that he judges all the actions of man after death :* from whence it follows that the ſoul is immortal, and that there is another life after this.

They knew, moreover, that God, out of his own pure goodneſs, had choſen them amongſt all mankind to be his faithful people :† and that, from amongſt them, of the tribe of Juda, and the race of David, was to be born a Saviour, who ſhould deliver them from all their evils, and bring all nations to the knowledge of the true God.‡ Theſe were the truths they diſtinctly knew; and were the ſubject of their ordinary meditations and prayers. This was the ſublime wiſdom which diſtinguiſhed them from all the nations of the earth.§ For whereas amongſt the reſt, there were only a few ſages who knew ſome of theſe great truths, and that but imperfectly, and with great diverſity of ſentiments about them; all the Iſraelites were inſtructed in this doctrine, even to the women and ſlaves; and all unanimouſly agreed in the ſame ſentiments.‖

The truths that were taught them more obſcurely, were: That in God there are three Perſons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.¶ That the Saviour they expected ſhould be God, and the Son of God :** that he ſhould be both God and man at the ſame time.††

* Eccl. viii. 11. Ib. xi. 9. xii. 15. † Deut. vii. 6. ix. 5, 6. ‡ Gen. xlix. 10. 2 Kings vii. 12. Pſ. xxi. 28. Pſal. lxxi. Iſ. xi. 1.—10. Ez. xxxiv. 23. § Deut. iv. 6. ‖ See Origen. in Celſ. Joſ. 2 in App. 6. ¶ Gen. i. 26. Pſ. xxxii. 6. ** Prov. xxx. 4. Iſ. xlviii. 16. Pſ. ii. 7. Ibid. cix. 3. †† Pſ. cix. 3. xliv. 7, 8.

That

That God gave man his grace and help to fulfil his law, only through this Saviour, and in conſideration of his merits:* That he ſhould ſuffer death for the expiation of the ſins of mankind:† That his kingdom ſhould be wholly ſpiritual:‡ that all men ſhould riſe again:§ That in the life to come would be the true reward of the good, and the true puniſhment of the wicked.‖ All theſe truths are taught in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament; but not in ſo clear a manner as to be known by all the common people.—And indeed men were not as yet capable of receiving ſuch ſublime truths.

But according to my plan, I have only to explain in what their exterior practices of religion chiefly differed from our manners They had only one Temple and one altar, where they were allowed to offer ſacrifices to God. This was a ſtriking mark of the Unity of God; and to repreſent alſo his ſovereign Majeſty, it was, at the ſame time, the moſt magnificent building in the whole country. It was not a ſingle building like moſt of our Churches; but a large incloſure, containing, beſides the body of the Temple, ſeveral courts ſurrounded with galleries, and other buildings for the different offices of the Prieſts and Levites. The Temples of other nations, ſuch as the Egyptians and Chaldeans, had alſo large buildings adjoining to them, and took up a great ſpace

* Gen. xxii. 18. If. liii. 11. Ibid. lx. 19. † If. liii. the whole chapter. ‡ Ibid. § Job xix. 26. ‖ Pſ. xvii. 15.

that he judges all the actions of man after death:* from whence it follows that the ſoul is immortal, and that there is another life after this.

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* Eccl. viii. 11. Ib. xi. 9. xii. 15. † Deut. vii. 6. ix. 5, 6. ‡ Gen. xlix. 10. 2 Kings vii. 12. Pſ. xxi. 28. Pſal. lxxi. Iſ. xi. 1.—10. Ez. xxxiv. 23. § Deut. iv. 6. ‖ See Origen. in Celſ. Joſ. 2 in App. 6. ¶ Gen. i. 26. Pſ. xxxii. 6. ** Prov. xxx. 4. Iſ. xlviii. 16. Pſ. ii. 7. Ibid. cix. 3. †† Pſ. cix. 3. xliv. 7, 8.

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* Gen. xxii. 18. If. liii. 11. Ibid. lx. 19. † If. liii. the whole chapter. ‡ Ibid. § Job xix. 26. ‖ Pſ. xvii. 15.

of ground: but they always planted trees about them: whereas the Iſraelites would allow none any where within the precincts of the Temple, to keep themſelves entirely free from the ſuperſtition of the groves, ſo ſacred amongſt the heathens.

The body of the Temple was ſixty foot long and twenty broad, without reckoning the ſanctuary of the *Holy of Holies*, which joined to it on the ſame floor, and was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits broad, and twenty cubits in height.* The reſt of the Temple was thirty cubits in height. At the entrance there was a Porch, which ſupported a large tower a hundred and twenty cubits high and twenty broad.† I leave the learned to judge of theſe proportions. But as to thoſe who may think the Temple ſmall, I deſire them to reflect that the people never went into it; the Prieſts alone, and only thoſe of them whoſe turn it was to ſerve in the Temple, went in, and that at ſtated hours, evening and morning, to light the lamps, to offer the loaves and perfumes. The High-Prieſt was the only one who entered the *Holy of Holies*, where the ark of the Covenant reſted; and that he did only once in the year.

The whole Temple, including the *Holy of Holies*, was wainſcoted with cedar, adorned with carved work, and all covered with plates of gold. On the outſide it was

* 3 Kings li. 2. &c. 6. c. 6. 2 Chron. iii. 4.

† Joſ. Ant. 15. c. ult. Bell.

ſur-

ſurrounded with two floorings of cedar, which made three ſtories of chambers for different uſes.* Before the Temple, in a large court, ſtood the altar of holocauſts, that is to ſay, a ſquare platform twenty cubits on every ſide, and ten cubits high. The Prieſts went up to it by an eaſy aſcent without ſteps, to place in order the wood and the victims. In the ſame court were ten large baſons of braſs, ſet on rolling baſes; and that which was ſupported by twelve oxen, is called, in the ſcripture, the *Brazen Sea.*

This court was the place appropriated to the Prieſts who offered the ſacrifices, particularly the part between the altar and the porch; for the laity might come as far as the altar when they offered ſacrifices, to preſent their victims and to ſlay them. On the ſteps of the porch which faced the Temple, ſtood the Levites, who ſang and played on muſical inſtruments. The court of the Prieſts was incloſed with galleries, and ſurrounded by a firſt court much larger, which was the uſual place for the people.† The women were ſeparated from the men; and the Gentiles could come no farther than under the galleries which incloſed this firſt court.‡ There were adjoining to theſe galleries of each court ſeveral rooms, chambers and ſtore-houſes for various uſes.§

There were treaſuries for the ſacred veſ-

* Cænacula. † 2 Chron. ii. 9. See Sept. & Heb. Ezech. xl. xli. xlii. ‡ Joſ. Ant. 43. § Gazophylacia. Paſtophoria. Thalami. Exhedræ.

ſels of gold and ſilver*, of which there was ſo great a number, that, at the return from the captivity, five thouſand four hundred were brought back†; veſtries alſo for the ſacred dreſſes of the Prieſts;‡ ſtore houſes, where were laid up the offerings ſet apart for the maintenance of the Prieſts and Levites, Widows and Orphans, and the depoſites of private perſons§: for it was the cuſtom of the ancients to make the public depoſitories in the Temple. In other places were kept the wine and oil for the libations: ſalt with which all the offerings were to be ſeaſoned; lambs choſen to be offered in perpetual ſacrifice every morning and evening‖. In other places were made the loaves to be piled up on the altar, or the ſhew-bread, and other ſorts of paſtry for the ſacrifices. There were kitchens for dreſſing the fleſh of the victims; dining-rooms for the Prieſts; guard-rooms for the Levites who kept the gates, and guarded the Temple day and night; chambers for the Levite-Muſicians:¶ another where the Nazareans were ſhaved after the accompliſhment of their vow;** another where the Lepers were examined;†† a hall wherein the ſupreme council of the ſeventy was held;‡‡ and other buildings with which we are not well acquainted. So many fine regular buildings gave, no doubt, a

* Jer. xxxv. 4. † 1 Eſd. ii. 14. ‡ Ez. xliv. 19. 2 Chron. xxxi. 11, 12 § 2 Macc. iii. 10. ‖ Talm. Cod. Middoth. ¶ Ez. xl. 23. ** Ibid. xlii. 13. †† Ibid. xliv. 45. ‡‡ Cod. Middoth. 1 Chron. xxxvi. 15.

high

high idea of the great King who was ſerved in that ſacred palace.

Four lambs were every day offered for a holocauſt, two in the morning, and two in the evening: and this is what is called the *perpetual ſacrifice.** On Sabbath-days and feſtivals the ſacrifices were multiplied in proportion to the greatneſs of the ſolemnity, without counting the offerings of private perſons, which were always very numerous.

We are hurt with the idea of theſe bloody ſacrifices, which made a ſhambles of the Temple: but it was the ſame amongſt other nations; and the Iſraelites took every precaution to perform theſe ſacrifices with all the neatneſs and cleanlineſs poſſible. The ſituation of the Temple contributed to this; for as it was upon a mountain, there were drains under it to carry off the blood and filth. The proper functions of the Prieſts were only to pour out the blood, to light the fire, and to lay upon it the pieces that were to be offered.† Private perſons killed the victims, prepared them, cut them in pieces, and dreſſed them. This we ſee in the law and in the hiſtory of the ſons of Eli.‡ The Prieſts never did theſe things, but in the public ſacrifices, which were offered for the whole people.

After this we are not to be ſurpriſed at the compariſon of a *pot*, which we find in Jeremias and Ezechiel, to repreſent the city of Je-

* Tamid. Entelechismos. Juge ſacrificium. † Lev. iv. 10. ‡ 1 Kings ii. 13.

ſalem.* Theſe two Prophets were Prieſts, and accuſtomed to ſee the ſanctified meat dreſſed. Now they conſidered every thing as great and noble, which was uſed in the ſervice of God, and the performance of his law: and moreover it was uſual for the beſt ſort of people to work with their own hands, and to do, as I obſerved before, all the neceſſaries of life themſelves. Thus, in Homer, the great King Agamemnon ſlaughters with his own hands the lambs, whoſe blood was the ſeal of the treaty he made with the Trojans.† In the ſame manner, when King Neſtor ſacrifices to Minerva, his ſons ſlay the victim, cut it in pieces, and broil it.‡ Homer is full of theſe inſtances, not in acts of religion only, but on other occaſions; as when Achilles received the deputies whom the other Greek Chiefs ſent to him.

After all, whatever is preſcribed in the law relating to the quality of the victims, and the form of the ſacrifices, tended more to turn the Iſraelites from ſuperſtition, by reducing them to a few ceremonies, than to the introducing any new ones.§ The idolaters ſacrificed, with more ceremonies, a greater variety of animals, and in many more places; as they had every where temples and altars, and each family had its domeſtic Gods, and its particular ſuperſtitions.‖ God thus prepared, long before-hand, his people for the abolition of bloody ſacrifices, often

* Jer. i. 13. Ez. xxiv. 3, 4, &c. † Illiad 3.
‡ Odyſſ. 2. in fine. § V. Tert. in Marc. 2. c. 18.
‖ Herod. lib. 2. c. 40.

telling

telling them by his Prophets that he had no need of them; that they were not eſſential to religion; and that the worſhip moſt pleaſing to him, were praiſes and a change of heart.*

It was neceſſary that the Prieſts ſhould marry, ſince the Prieſthood was confined to the family of Aaron; but they kept ſeparate from their wives during the time of their ſervice, when they alſo refrained from wine and every other inebriating liquor.† The like abſtinences were ſeen among the Idolaters, eſpecially the Egyptians; and their Prieſts, that they might wear nothing that came from dead animals, and tended to corruption, were clothed with linen only, and their ſhoes were made of that plant, from which the name of paper is derived.† The Prieſts of the Iſraelites ſerved bare-foot, but clothed alſo in linen. They were forbidden to wear woollen: and they put off theſe ſacred veſtments as ſoon as they quitted their own incloſure to enter the court of the people.‡ The Prieſts and all the Levites led the paſtoral life, ſo pleaſing to the Patriarchs, enjoying no other poſſeſſions but their flocks; for they had no ſhare in the allotment of the lands, in order to detach them from all temporal concerns, and to afford them more leiſure to apply themſelves to thoſe of Religion. They were, however, rich, when the people faithfully paid them

* 1 Kings xv. 12. Pſ. xlix. 8, &c. Iſ. lxvi. 3. Jer. vii. 21. & Ibid. Hier. † Lev. x. 9. ‡ Papyrus.

what

what the law ordered. For though their Tribe was the leaſt numerous of all the others, they had the Tithes of all the fruits of the earth gathered by the other twelve tribes; and conſequently their ſhare was the greateſt. They had moreover the Firſtlings of all the animals, without reckoning their own cattle; and the daily offerings on which the Prieſts ſubſiſted, while they ſerved at the altar in their turns.

I ſee no functions of civil life interdicted them; they bore arms like others; and the Prieſts ſounded the trumpet in the army, as well as on every other occaſion.* For they made uſe of ſilver trumpets to proclaim the Feſtivals, and to call the people to public prayers; and the name of *Jubilee* is taken from a ram's horn, which was blown to publiſh the opening thereof. The ancient Monks of Egypt preſerved the practice of blowing the trumpet to mark the hours of prayer;† for the uſe of bells is more modern.

The Feſtivals of the Iſraelites were the Sabbath of each week; the firſt day of every month, called in our tranſlations the calends or new-moon: the three ſolemn feſtivals of the Paſſover, Pentecoſt, and the Feaſt of the Tabernacles, inſtituted in remembrance of the three greateſt favours they had received from God; viz. the coming out of Egypt, the publication of the Law, and their being ſettled in the promiſed land after their jour-

* Deut. xx. 2 Chron. xiii. 12. Numb. x. Joſ. 5. bell. 3.

† Reg. S. Pacom.

ney.

ney in the deſert, where they had dwelt ſo long under tents.* Theſe great ſolemnities laſted ſeven days, probably in remembrance of the ſeven days of the creation.

The year conſiſted of twelve months, each of thirty days, nearly like ours. We find it thus regulated ſo early as the time of Noah, as appears from the dates of the deluge; but it is thought then to have begun from the autumnal Equinox. Moſes † was ordered to begin it in the ſpring, in the month *Abib*, which was that of the Paſſover; and the other months, with a reference to this firſt month, are denominated only by their number. They agree pretty nearly with our Roman months, whoſe names are taken from the ancient year, which began in the month of March. Thus the eighth month, in part at leaſt, was called October, the ninth November, and ſo of the reſt. They counted their months by the moon, at leaſt in the latter times, not aſtronomically, but from the viſible appearance of the new moon, which was publiſhed the day after by men appointed for that purpoſe. All the men were obliged to be at Jeruſalem at the Feaſts of the Paſſover, Pentecoſt and the Tabernacles: and the women were allowed to come thither, if they pleaſed. The aſſembly was very numerous, and every one dreſſed and decked themſelves out in the beſt manner. They had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing their relations and friends. They aſſiſted at the

* Lev. xxiii. Numb. xxviii, xxix. † Exod. xii. 2.

prayers

prayers and ſacrifices, which were always accompanied with muſic: they afterwards feaſted in this magnificent Temple on the peace-offerings: and the law itſelf commanded them to be joyful on theſe occaſions, and to unite a ſenſible joy to that which was ſpiritual.

We muſt not, therefore, be ſurpriſed that the approach of a feſtival, and that they were ſoon to go up to the houſe of the Lord, was ſuch an agreeable piece of news:* that thoſe were thought happy who ſpent their whole life there: that all the way thither they went in large companies, ſinging and playing on inſtruments:† and that it was conſidered as a great misfortune, to be deprived of the liberty of going thither, as David ſo often complains that he was, during his exile.‡

§ XXI.—FASTS. VOWS.

FASTING-Days were the reverſe of the Feſtivals. They then did every thing I mentioned, when I ſpoke of their mourning; for faſting and mourning were the ſame thing. Their faſts did not barely conſiſt in poſtponing their meals to a later hour, but in afflicting themſelves every way. They ſpent the whole day without eating or drinking till night:§ and this mode of faſting is

* Pſ. cxxi. lxxxiii. † Ibid. xli. & lxii. ‡ Pſal. xlii.
§ Iſ. lviii. 5.

ſtill

ſtill obſerved not only by the Jews, but alſo by the Mahometans, who in this followed them and the ancient Chriſtians. They remained in ſilence, ſitting on aſhes and covered with ſackcloth, and gave every other mark of grief and ſorrow. The public faſts were announced by ſound of trumpet, like the Feſtivals.* In Jeruſalem, all the people aſſembled in the temple: in other towns, in the market-place. Paſſages of the Law were read, and the moſt reſpectable old-men exhorted the people to acknowledge their ſins and repent of them. No marriages were celebrated on thoſe days, and even the huſbands ſeparated from their wives.

The law had appointed only one faſt-day, the tenth day of the ſeventh month, which was the feaſt of expiation or atonement:† but in the time of the Prophet Zacharias, there were reckoned two others,‡ the one in the fifth month, the other in the tenth. They had likewiſe extraordinary faſts; ſome on occaſion of any public calamities, as in the dearth mentioned by Joel;§ others for private calamities. Such were the faſts of David for the ſickneſs of the child, which was the fruit of his crime; for the death of Abner,‖ and on ſo many other occaſions which he takes notice of in his Pſalms.¶ Laſtly, they had faſts of pure devotion, in conſequence of ſome vow.

For the Iſraelites were very exact in keep-

* Joel ii. 15, 16, &c. † Lev. xvi. 29, &c.
‡ Zach. viii. 19. § Ibid. i. ‖ 2 Kings xii. 16.
¶ Ibid. iii. 35. Pſal. xxxiv. 13, 14. lxiii. 10, 11.

ing

ing their vows. The inſtance of Jephte is but too ſtrong a proof:* and as to oaths, Joſue kept the promiſe he had made the Gabaonites, though obtained by a moſt manifeſt fraud;† becauſe he had ſworn by the name of the Lord. Saul was for putting his ſon Jonathan to death for violating the prohibition of eating, which he had laid on the people and confirmed by an oath, though Jonathan's fault was a fault of ignorance:‡ and we meet with ſeveral other examples. They conſidered ſuch ſolemn promiſes in a very ſerious light, and allowed not themſelves the liberty of putting their own interpretation on them. It was an act of religion to ſwear by the name of God, as this oath diſtinguiſhed the Iſraelites from thoſe who ſwore by the name of falſe Gods.§ This muſt be underſtood of lawful and neceſſary oaths, ſuch as are taken in a court of judicature.

Their vows commonly conſiſted in offering to God ſome part of their property, either to be made uſe of in ſacrifices, or to be ſet apart by itſelf. Hence came thoſe great treaſures in the Temple of Solomon, which, beſides the offerings of David, were made up of thoſe of Samuel, Saul, Abner, and Joab.‖ It was chiefly of the booty taken from the enemy. The Heathens made the like offerings to the temples of their falſe Gods, either after victories obtained, or on other occaſions.¶ I need no other inſtances than the

* Judg. xi. 35. † Joſ. ix. 19. ‡ 1 Kings xiv. 27. § Deut. vi. 13. x. 20. Pſ. lxii. 12. ‖ Lev. xvii. 1 Chron. xxvi. 28. ¶ Herod. l. i.

temple

temple of Delphos, and the riches Cræſus ſent thither to procure favourable Oracles.

The moſt conſiderable vow was that of the Nazarites, who obliged themſelves, for a certain time, not to drink wine, or any other inebriating liquor; not to cut their hair, and careful to avoid all legal impurities, eſpecially coming near any dead bodies.* The rule of the Rechabites ſeems to have been founded on vows of this nature. The author of this rule was Jonadab the ſon of Rechab, who lived in the time of Jehu King of Iſrael, and the Prophet Eliſeus.† He forbade his children to drink wine, build houſes, to ſow, or to have lands or vineyards.‡ They therefore lived in tents, employing themſelves, probably, like the Levites, in feeding of cattle: thus perfectly imitating the paſtoral life of the Patriarchs. They married, and inviolably preſerved their rule in their family; at leaſt for the ſpace of a hundred and eighty years: for we do not know what became of them after the Captivity.

§ XXII.—Prophets.

THE Prophets were another kind of Religious Order of men, and more conſiderable. The number of them was very great in the time of Samuel, witneſs the large company Saul met, who propheſied at the

* Numb. vi. † 4 Kings x. 15. ‡ Jer. xxxv. 6.

found of inſtruments, tranſported by the Spirit of God:* and that other company which propheſied in the preſence of Samuel,† and who appear to have been his diſciples: but their number never appears to have been ſo great as from the time of Elias and Eliſeus to the captivity of Babylon. They lived ſeparated from the world, diſtinguiſhed from all others by their dreſs and way of life. They dwelt on mountains, as Elias and Eliſeus did on mount Carmel and Galgala. The rich woman, who lodged Eliſeus on his journey to Sunam, had a chamber, as I obſerved before, built and furniſhed for him, where he lived in ſo retired a manner, as not to ſpeak even to his hoſteſs, but made his ſervant Giezi ſpeak to her:‡ and when the ſame woman came to intreat him to raiſe her ſon to life again, Giezi would have hindered her from touching the Prophet's feet.§ When Naaman, General of the Syrian armies, went to him to be cured of his leproſy, he ſent him his orders what to do, without ſhewing himſelf.‖

Two other miracles performed by the ſame Prophet ſhew that his diſciples lived in community: that of the herb-pottage, of which he removed the bitterneſs;¶ and that of the barley-bread, which he multiplied:** and here we ſee alſo the plainneſs of their food. There were to the number of a hundred Prophets who lived together in this community. They

* 1 Kings x. 5. † Ibid. xix. 20. ‡ 4 Kings iv. 20. § Ibid. 27. ‖ 4 Kings v. 10. ¶ Ibid. iv. 41. 43. ** Ibid. 43.

followed

followed manual labour; for finding themſelves ſtraitened for lodgings, they went out themſelves to cut wood for building; and they were ſo poor, that one of them was forced to borrow an axe. The inſtance of Habbaccuc, who was taken up by an Angel to carry Daniel the dinner he had prepared for his reapers, is another proof of the ſimple and laborious life of the Prophets.*

Their dreſs was ſacking or hair-cloth, that is to ſay, mourning, to ſhew that they continually did penance for the ſins of all the people. Thus to deſcribe Elias, he is ſaid to be a man clothed in a hairy garment, and girt with a girdle of leather:† thus when God commands Iſaias to undreſs himſelf, he tells him to take off his ſackcloth from about his loins.‡ The two great Prophets mentioned in the Apocalypſe, appeared clothed in ſackcloth.§

The Prophets, at leaſt ſome of them, were, nevertheleſs, married men: and the widow whoſe oil the Prophet Elizeus multiplied, was a Prophet's widow:‖ it even appears that their children followed the ſame profeſſion; for the Prophets are often called *Sons of the Prophets*. This was what made Amos ſay: *I am no Prophet, nor the ſon of a Prophet, but only a herds-man*:¶ to ſhew that he did not propheſy by profeſſion, but by an extraordinary call. For although God, moſt commonmonly, employed thoſe, who led a prophetic

* Dan. xiv. 32. † 4 Kings i. 8. ‡ Iſ. xx. 2.
§ Apoc. xi. 3. ‖ 4 Kings iv. 1. ¶ Amos vii. 14.

life, to notify his will, he had impoſed no law on himſelf not to make revelations to any others.

Yet, generally ſpeaking, thoſe only were reckoned Prophets, who led a prophetic life: and for this reaſon the books of David, Solomon, and Daniel * are not ranked with the Prophetic books, becauſe the two former were Kings, living in delicacies and ſplendor; and the other a Satrap or Perſian governor, living at court and among the great.

Theſe were the holy men, who, after the Patriarchs, preſerved the pureſt tradition of the true religion. They employed their time in meditating on the law of God, in often praying to him night and day both for themſelves and others; and exerciſed themſelves in the practice of every virtue. They inſtructed their diſciples, unfolded unto them the ſpirit of the law, explained to them the ſublime meaning of the paſſages that related to the ſtate of the Church after the coming of the Meſſias, either on earth or in heaven, and which were concealed under allegories of ſenſible things, and ſeemingly mean. They alſo inſtructed the people, who came to them on the Sabbath-day and on other feſtivals.† They reproved them for their ſins, and exhorted them to repentance; and often foretold, on the part of God, what was to befall them. This liberty of telling the moſt diſagreeable truths, even to Kings themſelves, made them hated, and coſt ſeveral of them their lives.

* Eccl. xlix. 11, 12. † 4 Kings iv. 23.

There

There were, however, ſeveral impoſtors, who counterfeited the demeanour of the true Prophets, wearing like them ſackcloth, ſpeaking the ſame language, and pretending to be inſpired by God: but they took care to make no predictions, except ſuch as were pleaſing both to the people and Princes. The falſe Gods had alſo their Prophets; and ſuch were the eight hundred and fifty, whom Elias cauſed to be put to death.* Such were, among the Greeks, the Soothſayers, whom they called *Manteis*, as Calchas and Tereſias in the heroic times. Such alſo were thoſe who pronounced Oracles and publiſhed them; and the Poets who pretended to be inſpired by the Gods: for they ſaid not this by way of a poetical phraſe, but to make it believed that they really were inſpired. And, indeed, theſe falſe Prophets, either by the operation of the devil or by ſome artifice, became tranſported and ſpake in an unuſual ſtyle, to imitate the ſenſible effects of the Spirit of God in the true Prophets. Now it was a great temptation to the Iſraelites, who were weak in virtue, to conſult theſe Soothſayers and theſe falſe Oracles; and it was one of the branches of Idolatry into which they were very ſubject to fall, during the whole period of which we are ſpeaking.

* 3 Kings xviii. 19. 40.

§ XXIII.—IDOLATRY.

THIS propenſity to Idolatry appears very ſtrange and abſurd to us in the Manners of the Iſraelites; and it is chiefly this, that makes ſo many conſider them as an ignorant, ſtupid people. We ſee no Idolaters now; we only hear it ſaid, that there are ſtill ſome remaining in the Indies and other diſtant countries; but all the different nations that ſurround us, whether heretics, Jews or Mahometans, preach the unity of an almighty God: the very women of the loweſt rank, the moſt ignorant peaſants, have a diſtinct knowledge of this truth: and hence we conclude, that thoſe who believed in a plurality of Gods, and adored ſtocks and ſtones, muſt have been juſtly ranked among the moſt ignorant of mankind and the greateſt barbarians. We cannot, however, impute ignorance and barbariſm to the Romans, Grecians, Egyptians, Syrians, and the other nations of antiquity, from whom we have received all the arts, all the human ſciences, and all our politeneſs: and we cannot deny that Idolatry reigned amongſt them, with an abſolute ſway, at a time, when, in every other reſpect, they excelled in knowledge and politeneſs. We muſt, therefore, ſtop a little here, and dive to the very ſource of this evil.

Since the fall of man, the human mind is ſo much darkened, that, if left in the ſtate of corrupt nature, it has no idea of what is ſpiritual:

ſpiritual: it thinks only of body and matter, and conſiders, as nothing, whatever is not an object of ſenſe: nor does any thing appear ſolid, but what affects the groſſeſt ſenſes, the taſte and touch. This we ſee, but too plainly, in children and in men who follow their paſſions: they make no account of any thing but what they ſee and feel; they look on every thing elſe, as mere empty ſounds. Theſe men, nevertheleſs, have been brought up in the true Religion, in the knowledge of One God, and of an immortal ſoul, and a life to come. What could theſe heathens of old think, who had never heard ſuch things mentioned, and before whom nothing was laid by the wiſeſt men amongſt them, but objects of ſenſe and mere matter? Let any one read Homer, the great Theologian and the great Prophet of the Greeks, as long as he pleaſes; he will not find a ſingle word from which he can conjecture, that he had any notion of any thing ſpiritual and incorporeal.

And, indeed, all their wiſdom was confined to what regards the body and the ſenſes. The only end they propoſed to themſelves in their bodily exerciſes, and their gymnaſtic regimen, which they made a buſineſs of ſuch importance, was to preſerve and increaſe their health, ſtrength, activity and comelineſs; and this art they carried to the greateſt perfection. Painting, ſculpture, and architecture appertain to the pleaſure of ſight; and they had ſucceeded ſo well in theſe, that their houſes, their cities, and their whole country, were filled with agreeable objects, as is ſeen

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in the deſcriptions Pauſanias gives of them. They excelled likewiſe in muſic; and although Poetry ſeems to go beyond the ſenſes, it only reaches the imagination, which has the ſame objects and produces the ſame effects. Their laws and their moſt ancient rules of morality terminate in objects of ſenſe, viz. the well cultivating of the land; the providing each individual with the conveniences of life: the men marrying healthful and fruitful women; the educating the children in ſuch a manner, that their conſtitutions ſhould be good, and particularly fit for war: the ſecuring each individual againſt foreign enemies and bad citizens.

They attended ſo little to the good of the ſoul, that they hurt it to perfect the body. It was evidently contrary to decency for young men to appear ſtark naked in public, and perform their exerciſes in the ſight of every body. This, however, was looked upon as nothing; and at Lacedæmon even the young women went through their exerciſes in the ſame manner. It was a dangerous thing to expoſe every where ſtatues and paintings repreſenting every attitude of nakedneſs, even the moſt obſcene. This danger was particularly great with reſpect to painters and ſculptors, who copied from life. No matter for that; the pleaſure of ſight was to be gratified. And indeed it is well known to what a pitch of diſſolution the Greks arrived by theſe fine means: the moſt abominable acts of lewdneſs were not only practiſed by them, but held in eſteem. Muſic and Poetry, beſides

ſides fomenting the ſame vices, excited and kept up jealouſies and mortal hatred among the poets, actors and ſpectators; and private characters were torn to pieces and expoſed to cruel ridicule.—But all this gave no uneaſineſs, provided they had good ſinging, and fine ſhows.

Their religion was of the ſame ſtamp. Inſtead of improving their morals, it hurt them: and the ſource of all theſe misfortunes was, that man had forgotten himſelf, and his ſpiritual nature. All nations had preſerved a conſtant tradition, that there was a nature more excellent than that of man, able to do him both good and evil. As they knew nothing but corporeal ſubſtances, they would needs have that nature, that is the Deity, to be corporeal alſo; and that conſequently there was a plurality of Gods, to the end that every part of nature might have one; that every nation, every town and every family might have its own. They repreſented them to themſelves as immortal men; and in order to make them happy, they attributed to them the enjoyment of every pleaſure, even to the moſt ſhameful exceſſes, without which they could conceive no happineſs; and this afterwards ſerved to authorize their paſſions by the example of their Gods. It was not enough to repreſent them to their imagination as reſiding in heaven or on earth; they muſt alſo ſee them and feel them. They therefore honoured their idols as they did their Gods themſelves, being perſuaded that they were united to and incorporated

corporated with them: and they paid the greater honour to theſe ſtatutes, in proportion to their greater beauty or antiquity; or to ſome other ſingularity they had to recommend them.*

Their worſhip correſponded to their belief. It was entirely grounded on the gratification of two paſſions, the love of pleaſure, and the fear of outward evil.† Their ſacrifices always concluded with feaſting, and were accompanied with muſic and dancing. Comedy and Tragedy took their riſe from the merry-makings after the vintage in honour of Bacchus.‡ The Olympic games, and their other famous trials of ſkill, were performed in honour of their Gods. In a word, all the ſhews of Greece were ſo many acts of religion; and it was a faſhionable devotion amongſt them to aſſiſt at the moſt infamouſly indecent Comedies of Ariſtophanes. Thus their moſt important buſineſs, in the time of peace, was to take care of the ſacred combats and the theatrical exhibitions: and often, even in the time of war, they paid more attention to theſe, and were at a greater expence about them, than for the war itſelf.§

Their Religion, therefore, was not a doctrine of morals, like the true religion. He was reckoned a Saint, who was no murderer, traitor, nor guilty of perjury; who avoided all intercourſe with ſuch as had com-

* Wiſd. xiii. 10. † Ibid. xiv. 27. ‡ Tert. de ſpect. Aug. 2. de Civ. § Demoſt. Philip. 5.

mitted

mitted thoſe crimes; who obſerved the laws of hoſpitality and aſylums; who faithfully performed his vows, and contributed towards the expence of the ſacrifices and the public ſhews.* Religion was conſidered as a trade: the offerings were made to the Gods to obtain of them what they requeſted in their prayers.† As to any thing elſe, lewdneſs did not hurt their religion at all. Apuleius, after all the moſt ſhocking ſcenes of lewdneſs, with which he has filled his Metamorphoſes, concludes with a deſcription of his devotions, that is to ſay, of the eager deſire he had of getting himſelf initiated into all ſorts of myſteries, and how exact he was in the performance of all the ceremonies appertaining thereto.‡ Lewdneſs, ſo far from being condemned by their religion, was ſometimes commanded. It was neceſſary to get drunk, in order to celebrate the *Bacchanalia* or feaſts of Bacchus, as they ought; and women proſtituted themſelves in honour of Venus, eſpecially at Corinth.§ It is well known what the God of gardens, and the myſteries of Ceres and Cybele, were.‖

It was thus they honoured the Gods whom they looked upon as favourable and beneficent. But as to the *Dii Inferi* or infernal Deities, ſuch as Hecate, the Eumenides, the Parcæ, and others with whom their fables frightened them; they were to be appeaſed with nocturnal ſacrifices, and frightful in-

* Aug. de vera Rel. † Plato Euthyph. ‡ Apul. l. i. § Strabo ‖ Clem. Alex. in Protrept.

human

human ceremonies.* Some buried men alive, others ſacrificed children, and often their own, like the worſhippers of Moloch, ſo much deteſted in ſcripture, and who ſtill continued that abominable practice in Africa in the time of Tertullian.†

It is to this fear and dread that we muſt attribute all their cruel and troubleſome ſuperſtitions, ſuch as letting out their blood with lancets, flaſhing themſelves with knives, like the falſe prophets of Baal,‡ and the Prieſts of Cybele: as alſo their faſting, bathing in cold water, and other like practices.§ They thought they could avert, by theſe means, the public or private calamities, with which they were threatened by the Oracles, dreams and prodigies, as interpreted by the Soothſayers. Theſe practices were, as they imagined, ſo many remedies againſt diſtempers, the plague, hail, and dearths. Now, on ſuch occaſions, men rather chooſe to do what is of no uſe at all, than omit any thing that may be of ſervice to them. The whole ceremony of their luſtration or expiation of crimes was of this kind of painful ſuperſtitions: it conſiſted in purifying the body by water or by fire, and performing certain ſacrifices; but nothing was ever ſaid either of repentance or a change of life.

It will appear, perhaps, ſurpriſing, that men of ſuch enlightened minds as the Greeks

* Wiſd. xiv. 23. † Tert. Apol. c. 9. ‡ 3 Kings xviii. 28. § Mane die quo tu indicis jejunia, nudus in Tiberi ſtabit. Hor. L. 2. ſat. ii. 221.

were,

were, ſhould give into ſuch groſs ſuperſtitions, and ſuffer themſelves to be eaſily impoſed upon by Aſtrologers, Augurs, Aruſpices, and ſo many other ſorts of Soothſayers. But it muſt be conſidered that, until the time of Alexander, and the reign of the Macedonians, they had made no great progreſs in the ſciences that might cure them of ſuperſtition. They excelled in the arts, their Laws were wiſe: in a word, they had brought every thing to perfection, that could render life eaſy and agreeable: but they had applied little to the ſpeculative ſciences, ſuch as Geometry, Aſtronomy and Phyſics. The anatomy of animals and plants, the nature of Minerals and Meteors, the figure of the earth, the courſe of the ſtars, and the whole ſyſtem of the world, were ſo many hidden myſteries to them. The Chaldeans and Egyptians, who already had ſome knowledge of theſe things, made a ſecret of them, ſpoke of them only enigmatically, and blended them with an infinite number of ſuperſtitious practices and fables.

As theſe ſciences depend chiefly on experiments, the ſucceſſion of ages always adds thereto; and they are at preſent arrived at the greateſt perfection they ever were at before. They are openly taught all who chooſe to apply to them: and they all agree perfectly with our holy Religion, which condemns all ſuperſtition, every ſpecies of divination and Magic. However, there are ſtill too many who give ear to Aſtrologers, and all ſuch ſorts of impoſtors: I mean not only

peaſants, and the ignorant of the loweſt claſs of the people; I ſpeak of women who value themſelves for their wit, politeneſs and knowledge; and of men brought up amongſt the learned and in the beſt company, who, in other reſpects, ſet themſelves up for perſons of ſuperior underſtanding and ſtrength of reaſoning, and at the ſame time refuſe to ſubmit to the authority of the true Religion.

What then muſt have been the caſe when all theſe fooleries made a part of Religion; when Soothſayers paſſed for men really divine; when Aſtrology, Pyromancy, Necromancy and all the reſt were divine ſciences! How could the authority of the Prieſts and falſe prophets be withſtood, who ſeriouſly related an infinity of experimental proofs in confirmation of their doctrine, and who were blindly followed by whole nations? It was neceſſary to believe them, when no one knew how ſuch things could be naturally done; and if any even had known this, he muſt have been a very bold man to contradict them.

The bent, therefore, to Idolatry was not peculiar to the Iſraelites, it was a general evil; and that hardneſs of heart with which the ſcripture ſo often reproaches them, is not for their being more attached to the objects of ſenſe than other nations; it is for being as much attached thereto, after having received ſuch particular favours from God, and having ſeen ſuch great miracles. True it is, ſtrength of mind was neceſſary to withſtand the bad example of the other nations.

tions. When an Iſraelite was out of his own country amongſt unbelievers, they, not ſeeing him offer any ſacrifice, nor adore the idols, accuſed him of being without all religion: and when he ſpoke to them of his God, the Creator of heaven and earth, they only laughed at him, and aſked him where he was. Theſe taunts were hard to bear: David himſelf teſtifies, that he fed night and day on his tears, when he was every day aſked, *where was his God?** Weak ſouls were ſtaggered with theſe attacks, and often did not withſtand them.

The propenſity we all have to pleaſure, increaſed the temptation: for the feſtivals of the heathens were both magnificent and frequent. Curioſity engaged the younger ſort, and eſpecially the young women to go and ſee their proceſſions, the manner of dreſſing out the victims, their dances, the choirs of muſic, and the ornaments of the temples. There was always ſome obliging ſtranger, who engaged them to take a place at the feaſt, and to eat of the meat that had been offered to the idols, or to go home with him. They got acquaintances, and formed intrigues, which ended either in downright debauchery, or marriages contrary to the law. Thus did Idolatry inſinuate itſelf into their minds, the ordinary allurements to which were good cheer and women. In the time of Moſes the young women of Madian engaged the Iſraelites in the infamous myſteries of Beel-

* Pſ. xli. 3.

phegor :* they were the ſtrange women that perverted Solomon.

Beſides this, the law of God might appear to them too ſevere They were allowed to offer ſacrifice only in one place, by the hands only of the Prieſts of the race of Aaron, and according to certain very ſtrict rules: and there were only three great feſtivals during the whole year, that is, the Paſſover, Pentecoſt, and the feaſt of Tabernacles. Theſe were but a few for a people that lived in plenty, and in a climate that inſpired pleaſure. However, as they lived in the country and were entirely taken up with their domeſtic concerns, they could not conveniently meet together, but on feſtivals: they were therefore forced to borrow thoſe of ſtrangers, or to invent new ones themſelves. Do not we, who look upon ourſelves ſo ſpiritual, (as we certainly ought to be, if we were truly Chriſtians) often prefer the poſſeſſion of what ſtrikes our ſenſes, to the hopes of what is eternal? And do we not endeavour to reconcile with the Goſpel many diverſions, which all antiquity has judged incompatible with it, and againſt which thoſe who are our Inſtructors in religion, never ceaſe to declaim? We deteſt Idolatry, it is true; but the reaſon is becauſe we do not now ſee it practiſed, and it has been entirely out of credit amongſt us for now above a thouſand years. We are not, therefore, to imagine that the Iſraelites were a more ſtu-

* Numb. xxv.

pid

pid people than the other nations, becauſe the frequent favours they received, did not cure them of Idolatry: but we ought to acknowledge that the wound of original ſin muſt have been very deep, ſince ſuch ſacred inſtructions, and ſo great miracles, were not ſufficient to raiſe men above objects of ſenſe. And in fact we ſee many nations, in every other reſpect the moſt enlightened, ſuch as were the Greeks and Romans, beyond all compariſon, ſtill more blinded.

§ XXIII.—POLITICAL STATE. LIBERTY. DOMESTIC POWER.

AFTER what we have ſaid of the Religion of the Iſraelites, we muſt ſay a word or two of their political ſtate. They were perfectly free, eſpecially before they had Kings. There was no ſuch thing as homage, royalties or manors, or any reſtraint with regard to hunting or fiſhing amongſt them; nor any of thoſe kinds of dependencies ſo common amongſt us, and from which the great Lords themſelves are not exempt: For we ſee ſovereign Princes vaſſals, and even officers of other ſovereigns; as in Germany and Italy. They therefore enjoyed that liberty ſo dear to the Greeks and Romans; and which they might have enjoyed for ever, if they had a mind. This was the intention of God, as is evident from the reproofs Samuel made them in his name, when

they demanded a King.* And Gedeon knew this very well; ſince, when they wanted to make him King, and ſecure the kingdom to his poſterity, he generouſly anſwered: *I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my Son rule over you, but the Lord ſhall rule over you.*†

Their ſtate, therefore, was neither a Monarchy, Ariſtocracy nor Democracy, but, as Joſephus calls it, a Theocracy;‡ that is to ſay, that God governed them immediately by the law he had given them. While they faithfully obſerved this law, they lived in ſafety and freedom; as ſoon as they violated it, they fell into anarchy and confuſion. This the ſcripture points out, when it alledges as the cauſe of the greateſt crimes: that *in thoſe days there was no king in Iſrael*, and *every one did what was right in his own eyes.*§ This anarchy divided and weakened them, and made them fall a prey to their enemies: till entering into themſelves, they had recourſe to God, who ſent them deliverance. It was thus they lived under the judges, falling, from time to time, into idolatry and diſobedience to the law of God, and by that means into confuſion and ſlavery, and then riſing again from time to time. At laſt they choſe rather to appoint themſelves a maſter, than to remain free, by faithfully obſerving the law of God.

Their liberty, reduced to its juſt bounds, conſiſted in doing whatever the law of God did not forbid them to do, and in not being

* 2 Kings x. 18. &c. † Jud. viii. 23.
‡ Joſ. 2 App. 6. § Jud. xviii. 31.

obliged

obliged to do any thing not commanded by the law, exempt from all ſubjection to the will of any particular perſon. But the domeſtic power of heads of families over their ſlaves and children, was very great. There were Hebrews, who were ſlaves to their brethren, and the Law points out two cauſes which might reduce them to that ſtate; poverty, which obliged them to ſell themſelves; or the crime of theft, where the thief had it not in his power to pay the value of what he had ſtolen.* It is probable that this ſecond cauſe extended alſo to other debts by the inſtance of the widow, whoſe oil Eliſeus increaſed to enable her to pay her creditors, and ſave her children from ſlavery.† It is true, theſe Hebrew ſlaves might regain their freedom after the expiration of ſix years, that is in the Sabbatic year;‡ and if they did not chooſe to make uſe of this privilege, they might claim their freedom and preſerve the ſame for their children after fifty years at leaſt, that is in the Jubilee-year.§ It was recommended to them to treat their brethren with mildneſs, and to employ rather ſtrangers for ſlaves. We ſee how ſubmiſſive their ſlaves were by theſe words of the Pſalmiſt: *As the eyes of a ſervant are on the hands of his maſter, ſo are our eyes on the Lord.*‖ The meaning of which is, that the maſters often commanded only by ſigns, and that the ſervants were attentive to their leaſt motions.

* Lev. xiv. 19. Exod. xxii. 3. † 4 Kings iv. 1.
‡ Exod. xxi. 2. § Lev. xxv. 40. ‖ Pſ. cxxii. 2.

The

The Iſraelites had power of life and death over their ſlaves; and this law was common to all nations. This ſlavery had originated in the right of war, when inſtead of putting the vanquiſhed enemy to death, they choſe rather to ſave their lives and make uſe of them.* Hence it was ſuppoſed the Conqueror always retained his power of depriving them of life, whenever they rendered themſelves unworthy of it: that he acquired alſo the ſame right over their children, as they could not have been born, if he had not ſpared the father's life, and that he transferred this power when he alienated his ſlave. Such was the foundation of the abſolute power of maſters, and they rarely abuſed it: for their intereſt obliged them to preſerve their ſlaves, who made a part of their riches. This was the reaſon why the Law of God did not puniſh the maſter who had beaten his ſlave in ſuch a manner that he died within a few days.† *He is his money*, ſays the Law, to ſhew that his loſs was a ſufficient puniſhment: and it might be preſumed in that caſe, that the maſter intended only to chaſtiſe his ſlave. But if the ſlave died under the ſtrokes, it might be thought that the maſter really deſigned to kill him; and the Law declared him guilty. The Romans had a right, for the ſpace of above five hundred years, to put their ſlaves to death, to clap their debtors in chains upon default of payment, and to ſell their own children three times before they

* Juſtin. de Jure perſ. § 3. † Exod. xxi. 20, &c.

were

were from under their power:* and all this by virtue of the wiſe laws of the twelve tables which they brought out of Greece, at the time the Jews were re-eſtabliſhed after their return from the captivity; that is to ſay, about a thouſand years after Moſes.

As to the paternal power of the Hebrews, the Law allowed them to ſell their daughters;† but this ſale was a ſort of marriage, as it was amongſt the Romans.‡ We ſee, however, by a paſſage of Iſaias, that fathers ſold their children to their creditors:§ and in the time of Nehemias, the poor offered to ſell their children for food to ſupport life:‖ and others complain, that they had not wherewith to ranſom their children already reduced to a ſtate of ſlavery. They had the power of life and death over their children, ſince the Wiſe-man ſays: *Correct thy ſon, deſpair not; but do not ſet thy mind on killing him.*¶ It is true, they were not at liberty, like the Romans, to exerciſe this rigorous law by their own authority, without informing the Magiſtrate.** The Law of God only allowed the father and mother, after trying all ſorts of domeſtic correction, to bring their diſobedient and abandoned ſon before the Senate of the town; and, on their complaint, he was condemned to death and ſtoned.†† This ſame law was in force at Athens,‡‡ and was grounded on this princi-

* Inſtit. de his qui ſui vel al. § 2. Inſt. quibus modis Iud. Pat. § 6. † Exod. xxi. 7. ‡ Per coemptionem. § If. l. 1. ‖ 2 Eſd. v. 2. 5. ¶ Prov. xix. 18. ** Liv. lib. 2. †† Deut. xxi. 19. ‡‡ Heliod. i.

ple,

ple, that all children receive life from their parents, and that no parents were ſuppoſed to be ſo unnatural as to put their children to death, unleſs they had been guilty of ſome horrid crimes. However, this dread of a parent's power was of great ſervice towards keeping children in perfect ſubjection.

We ſee but too many evils which have flowed from the weakening or rather total annihilation of this paternal authority. However young a ſon be, provided he be married, or can maintain himſelf without his Father's aſſiſtance, he pretends he now owes him nothing more than a little reſpect.—Hence that infinite multitude of ſmall families, and of people who live alone, or in houſes together, where all are equally maſters. Theſe young independents, if they be rich, plunge themſelves in exceſs and ſoon ruin themſelves: if they be poor, they become vagabonds, whom nobody will own, and capable of every ſort of villainy. Beſides the corruption of morals, this independence may alſo bring great miſchiefs on the ſtate; for it is much more difficult to govern a multitude of men living ſeparate and of indocile diſpoſitions, than a ſmall number of heads of families, each of which was anſwerable for a great number of men, and was, commonly ſpeaking, an old man that underſtood the laws.

§ XXIV.

§ XXIV.—AUTHORITY of OLD MEN.

NOT only Fathers, but all old men had great authority among the Iſraelites, and amongſt all the ancients. At firſt Judges for private affairs, and Counſellors for the public, were every where choſen from amongſt the oldeſt men. Hence at Rome came the names of *Senate*, and *Fathers*, and that reſpect for old age which they had learned from the Lacedemonians. Nothing is conformable to nature. Youth is fit only for motion and action: old age can inſtruct, adviſe and command. *The glory of youth is their ſtrength*, ſays the Wiſe-man, *and the dignity of old men, are their grey hairs.** It is very difficult for either ſtudy or good natural parts to ſupply the want of experience in youth: and an old man, provided he have good natural ſenſe, becomes knowing by experience alone. All hiſtory proves, that thoſe ſtates were the beſt governed, wherein old men had the chief authority; and the reigns of Princes too young, have been the moſt unhappy. It is thus the Wiſe-man ſays: *Woe be to the land, whoſe King is a child.*† And this is the misfortune with which God threatens the Jews, when he tells them by his Prophet Iſaias, *that he will give them children for Princes.*‡ In reality, youth has neither patience nor foreſight, is an enemy to rule, and ſeeks nothing but pleaſure and change.

* Prov. xx. 29. † Eccleſ. ‡ Iſ. iii. 4.

As

As ſoon as the Hebrews were formed into a body of people, they were governed by old men. When Moſes came into Egypt to promiſe them their liberty in the name of God, he aſſembled the Elders, and performed, in their preſence, thoſe miracles, which authenticated his miſſion.* All the Elders of Iſrael came to the entertainment he gave his father-in-law, Jethro.† When God was pleaſed to give him a Council to eaſe him in the government of that numerous people: *chooſe*, ſaid he, *ſeventy men, whom thou knoweſt to be the Elders and governors over my people.*‡ They were, therefore, already poſſeſſed of authority, before the Law was given, and the government had aſſumed its form. Throughout the whole ſcripture, wherever aſſemblies or public affairs are mentioned, the Elders are always placed in the firſt rank, and ſometimes named alone.

Hence the expreſſion in the Pſalm, which exhorts to praiſe God in the congregation of the people, and in the ſitting of the Elders,§ that is, in the public council. Theſe are the two parts, of which all the ancient Republics were compoſed: the aſſembly of the people, which the Greeks called *Eccleſia*, and the Latins, *Concio*, and the Senate. The name *Elder* afterwards became a title of dignity; the name of *Prieſt* is taken from a Greek word, of the ſame ſignification; and that of *Seignior* from a Latin one. We may judge

* Exod. iv. 29. † Ibid. xviii. 12. ‡ Numb. xi. 16. § Pſ. cvi. 32.

of

of the age requiſite among the Hebrews for a man to be counted an *Elder*, from the name of *young men* given to thoſe whoſe advice Roboam followed :* for it is ſaid *that they had been brought up with him*; from whence we may conclude that they were about his age; and he was then forty.†

§ XXV.—Administration of Justice. Gate.

JUSTICE was adminiſtred by two ſorts of Officers, the *Sophetim* and the *Soterim*, eſtabliſhed in every city by the orders of Moſes, at the appointment of God.‡ It is certain the word *Sophetim* ſignifies *Judges:* as to *Soterim*, it is variouſly tranſlated in different parts of the Vulgate :§ but the tradition of the Jews explains it of miniſters of juſtice, as Tip-ſtaves, Bailiffs, Thief-takers, and other executioners of writs or warrants. Theſe employments were given to the Levites, and in David's time their number amounted to ſix thouſand.‖ Theſe were the Judges whom Joſaphat re-eſtabliſhed in each city, and to whom he gave ſuch fine inſtructions.¶ The ſcripture adds, that he eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem a company of Levites, Prieſts and Heads of families to judge in greater cauſes.** This is the Council of Seventy erected in the time of Moſes ;††

* 3 Kings xii. 8. † 2 Chron. xii. 13. ‡ Deut. xvi. 18. § Magiſtri Præfecti, Duces, Præcones. Joſ. iii. 2. ‖ 1 Chron. xxiii. 4. ¶ 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, 7. ** Ibid. 8. †† Deut. xvii. 8.

wherein preſided the High Prieſt, and whither were carried all the queſtions that were too difficult to be decided by the judges of the leſſer towns. The tradition of the Jews is, that theſe judges of the particular towns were twenty-three in number: that they were to be aſſembled on caſes of life and death; and that three were ſufficient for civil cauſes, and other buſineſs of leſs conſequence.* The King was the chief Judge, according to what the people ſaid to Samuel: *Give us a King to judge us.*†

The place where theſe Judges held their court was the Gate of the city: for as all the Iſraelites were huſbandmen, who went out in the morning to work, and returned not again till evening, the city-gate was the place where they oftenеſt met with one another. And we muſt not be ſurpriſed that they worked in the fields and lived in the cities: for they were not ſuch cities as the capitals of our provinces, which can ſcarce ſubſiſt on what the country for twenty or thirty leagues round ſupplies them. They were only the dwellings of as many huſbandmen as were neceſſary to cultivate the neighbouring fields. Hence, as the country was well peopled, the number of them was very great. The tribe of Juda alone counted one hundred and fifteen in its ſhare of the country, when it entered on the poſſeſſion of it; beſides what were built afterwards; and each

* Cod. Sanhedr. c. i. 1, 6, &c. † 1 Kings viii. 5.

city

city had villages dependent on it.* They muſt, therefore, have been ſmall, and very near one another, like large villages ſurrounded with walls and well built: in all other reſpects exactly like what we ſee in the country.

For a like reaſon, among the Greeks and Romans, the place of meeting for all kinds of buſineſs was the market-place, becauſe they were all trades-people. Among our anceſtors the vaſſals of each Lord aſſembled in the court of his caſtle, and hence came the Courts of Princes. In the Levant, as the Princes live more ſhut up, buſineſs is tranſacted at the gate of the Seraglio; and this cuſtom of making one's court at the gate of the palace was in uſe in the time of the ancient Kings of Perſia, as may be ſeen in ſeveral paſſages of the book of Eſther.†

The gate of the city was the place where all public and private buſineſs was tranſacted in the times of the Patriarchs. Abraham made the purchaſe of his burying-place in the preſence of all who entered at the gate of the city of Hebron.‡ When Hemor and his ſon Sichem, who had carried off Dina, propoſed to make an alliance with the Iſraelites, it was at the gate of the city that they ſpoke of it to the people.§ We ſee the form of theſe public acts, with all the particulars, in the hiſtory of Ruth.‖ Booz, reſolving to marry her, made him, who had a

* Joſ. xv. 21. † Eſther ii. 19. iii. 2, 3. ‡ Gen. xiii. 10. 18. § Ib. xxxiv. 20. ‖ Ruth iv.

better right to her, as the neareſt relation, transfer his right to her over to him. For this purpoſe, he ſat himſelf down at the gate of Bethlehem, and when he ſaw the relation paſſing by, he ſtopped him. He then took twelve of the Elders of the city, and after they were ſeated, he laid his claim before them, and drew from his kinſman the declaration he had demanded, with the formality appointed by the law, the pulling off his ſhoe. He took for witneſſes of this, not only the Elders, but all the people, which ſhews that there were a great many ſpectators. And, indeed, it is probable that curioſity might ſtop all that were going by. They had not, generally ſpeaking, any very urgent buſineſs on hand; they all knew one another; they were all relations, and conſequently took an intereſt in what concerned each other.

Perhaps theſe tranſactions were taken in writing; though the ſcripture doth not ſpeak of it, except in Tobias and Jeremias, a little before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. In Tobias, mention is made of a promiſſory note for money lent, of a contract of marriage, and of a donation in favour of the marriage.* In Jeremias it is a contract on a purchaſe made.† The Law of Moſes requires no deed in writing, but in the caſe of a divorce :‡ but although there had been no writings drawn up in theſe early ages, their

* Tob. i. 17. vii. 16. viii. 24. † Jer. xxvii. 10.
‡ Deut. xxiv. 1.

contracts

contracts could not but have been very ſecure, as being made in ſo public a manner. If the Kinſman of Booz had been diſpoſed to conteſt the ceſſion he had made, all the inhabitants of Bethlehem would have convicted him of knavery; ſome had been preſent at the tranſaction, and others had immediately heard of it.

It was long before the Romans uſed writing for private contracts, as is evident from their verbal obligation, which they called *Stipulatio*. They were not afraid that an act would want proof, when they had pronounced certain ſolemn words before all the people in the market-place; and had taken as witneſſes ſome particular citizens of rank and unblemiſhed character. Theſe acts were full as public, as thoſe made now-a-days in private houſes, in preſence of a Notary, who often knows not the parties, or a Scrivener of ſome country village, and two hack-witneſſes.

The Gate among the Hebrews, may be ſaid to be the ſame as the *Forum* or market-place among the Romans. The market for proviſions was held at the city-gate. Eliſeus foretold that proviſions ſhould be cheap the next day at the gate of Samaria.* This gate had a ſquare before it, which muſt have been a large one, ſince King Achab aſſemble there four hundred falſe Prophets.† I imagine it was the ſame in the other cities; and that theſe gates had ſome building, in

* 4 Kings vii. † Ibid. 3. xxii. 6. 10.

which were ſeats for the Judges and Elders For it is ſaid, that Booz went up to the gate, and ſat down: and when David was informed of the death of Abſalom, he went up to the chamber of the Gate to weep.* This chamber might be the place for the privy council to meet in. In the temple of Jeruſalem itſelf, cauſes were decided at one of the Gates, and the Judges there held their ſittings.† After all theſe inſtances, we ought not to be ſurpriſed that the ſcripture ſo often uſes the word *Gate*, to expreſs the trying of a cauſe, or the public council of each city, or the city itſelf, or the ſtate; and that in the Goſpel the *Gates* of *Hell* ſhould ſignify the Kingdom or power of the Devil.

After all, notwithſtanding the apparent ſimplicity of the manner in which the Iſraelites tranſacted their buſineſs, we muſt not conclude from thence, that there were no frauds, no chicanery, unjuſt law-ſuits or calumnies amongſt them. Theſe are evils inſeparable from the corruption of human nature; and the more ſprightly and vigorous the diſpoſitions of men are, the more are they ſubject thereto. But they are particularly the evil of great cities. When David fled from Jeruſalem on occaſion of the revolt of Abſalom, he repreſents fury and diſcord ſtalking night and day on its walls; within, miſchief and injuſtice; and uſury and deceit in its ſtreets:‡ the Prophets are full of

* 2 Kings xviii. 32. † Jer. xxviii. 10. ‡ Pſal. liv. 10, &c.

the

the ſame reproaches. Only we may believe that theſe evils were leſs frequent amongſt them than amongſt us, becauſe there were fewer who followed the profeſſion of the law.

As the Law of God regulated temporal affairs, as well as thoſe of Religion, there was no diſtinction of tribunals; the ſame judges determined caſes of conſcience as well as civil and criminal cauſes. Few different employments, therefore, were requiſite, and fewer people to fill them, in compariſon of what we have now-a-days: for amongſt us it is diſgraceful to be only in a private ſtation of life, and to have no other occupation, than to improve one's eſtate and govern one's family. Every body aſpires after ſome public employment, the enjoyment of honours, prerogatives and privileges: and all public employments are conſidered either as ſo many trades to get bread, or as ſo many titles of diſtinction. But if we would conſider only what is eſſential in them, that is, thoſe public functions which are real and neceſſary, it would be found that a ſmall number of people might diſcharge them all, and have moreover time enough to attend to their own private concerns.

This was done amongſt all the nations of antiquity, and chiefly among the Hebrews. Under Joſue I find but four names of any public employments: the *Zenekim*, Senators or Elders; the *Raſim*, or Chiefs; the *Sophetim*, or Judges; the *Soterim*, or thoſe who executed

executed the ſentence of the law.* In David's time, when the Kingdom was in the moſt flouriſhing ſtate, the following are all the public Officers mentioned.† The ſix thouſand Levites, Judges and Executioners of the Law: the Heads of tribes: the Heads of families, which are rather names of dignity than of public employments: the Heads of the twelve corps of twenty-four thouſand men each: the Heads of one thouſand, and of a hundred men: the Heads over thoſe who took care of the King's demeſnes, that is to ſay, of his lands and cattle. I here call thoſe Heads or Chiefs, whom the Hebrew text calls *Sarim*, and the Latin *Principes*. But it muſt be ſaid once for all, that it is impoſſible to expreſs, in another language, the titles of public employments and dignities. Thus neither the Greek nor Latin verſions give us any juſt idea of the Chaldæan dignities mentioned in Daniel, Ezechiel and other places of ſcripture.‡

Amongſt David's officers are reckoned his Eunuchs, or the Officers of his houſehold; for throughout the ſcripture, the word *Eunuch* is often taken for a Valet de Chambre, officer of the bed-chamber, or any other employed about the King's perſon, without pointing out any perſonal imperfection. The Heads, moreover, of fifty men are mentioned in other places;§ but as to the Heads over ten, I only find them mentioned in the Law.‖

* Joſ. xxiv. 1. † 1 Chron. xxiii. 4. xxviii. 1. ‡ Dan. iii. 3. Ezech. xxiii. 23. § 4 Kings i. 9. Iſ. ii. 3. ‖ Exod. xviii. 25.

The

The greateſt part of theſe employments are military; and the others are inconſiderable, if we reflect on the great multitude of the people, and the extent of the Kingdom of David.

§ XXVI.—WAR.

NEXT to the adminiſtration of juſtice we muſt ſpeak of War. All the Iſraelites bore arms without exception, even the Levites and Prieſts. Banaias the Prieſt, the ſon of Joiada, was one of the moſt illuſtrious of David's valiant men, and ſucceeded Joab in the chief command of Solomon's troops.* All, therefore, were reckoned ſoldiers, who were of age to ſerve; and this age was from twenty and upwards.† They were like the militia of certain countries, ever ready to aſſemble at the firſt orders. The difference is, that amongſt us the uſe of arms is forbidden all thoſe who are conſecrated to God, and that we have beſides an infinite number of people, who are uſeleſs in war, ſuch as lawyers, officers of the revenue, tradeſmen, ſhopkeepers, artificers; whereas they were all huſbandmen and herdſmen, who had, from their youth, been inured to fatigue and labour. It is even probable that they were exerciſed in the uſe of their arms, at leaſt from the time of David and Solomon.‡ In the ſame manner, at

* 2 Kings xxiii. 20. † 3 Kings ii. 35. ‡ Numb. i. 3, 22. § 2 Chron. viii. 9.

Rome,

Rome, all the citizens of a certain age were obliged to ſerve a fixed number of campaigns, when commanded; from whence it comes that they uſed not the expreſſion of *levying* troops, but of *picking them out*, becauſe there always remained a great many more than they wanted. The Iſraelites had no difficulty in ſubſiſting their armies: for the country was ſo ſmall, and the enemy ſo near, that they often came home at night, or had only a march of one or two days to make.

Their arms were nearly the ſame as thoſe of the Greeks and Romans, that is to ſay, ſwords, bows and arrows, javelins and ſpears, or half-pikes; for we muſt not imagine that the ancients uſed long ſpears, like thoſe of our Knights-errant of old. Their ſwords were broad and ſhort, and hung on their thigh.* They alſo made uſe of ſlings, witneſs the inhabitants of Gabaa in Benjamin, who could hit a hair :† and theſe ſame Gabaonites could fight equally with both hands. Saul commonly held a javelin in his hand,‡ ſuch as Homer gives his heroes, and the Romans gave Quirinus and their other Gods. They did not, however, wear arms, but when they had occaſion to uſe them; not even a ſword. When David ordered his men to march againſt Nabal, he tells them firſt of all to take their ſwords, although they were in a ſtate of continual alarms.§ The cuſtom of always wearing a ſword by the ſide was peculiar to the Gauls and Germans.

* Exod. xxxii. 23. Pſal. xliv. 4. Cant. iii. 8. † Judg. xx. 16. ‡ 1 Kings xviii. 10. § Ibid. xxv. 13.

For

For defenſive arms they bore ſhields, bucklers, helmets, cuiraſſes, or armour for the back and breaſt, and ſometimes greaves, or an armour for the legs. We ſee an inſtance of a complete ſuit of armour in that of Golias,* which was all of braſs like that of the Greeks in Homer. But theſe arms ſeem to have been ſcarce among the Iſraelites, as King Saul offered to lend David his own.† They afterwards became very common, and Ozias had wherewith to arm all his troops, which amounted to upwards of three hundred thouſand men.‡ This ſame King placed upon the towers on the walls of Jeruſalem machines to throw darts and large ſtones: he alſo fortified ſeveral towns, like moſt other kings. Thus was war then carried on in much the ſame manner as it was in the latter ages, before the invention of fire-arms.

In the firſt ages the Iſraelites had only Infantry, and that alſo was the chief ſtrength of the Greeks and Romans. Horſes are not neceſſary in hot countries, where people can always walk dry-ſhod: they are even uſeleſs in mountainous places: but they are of great help in cold countries, to get through bad roads, and to make long marches over plains either barren or thinly inhabited, ſuch as are in Poland and Tartary.

The Iſraelites had Cavalry under the Kings. The firſt ſignal of Abſalom's revolt, was his raiſing horſes and chariots; never-

* Ibid. xvii. 5, 6, &c. † 1 Kings xvii. 28.
‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 14. Ibid. 15.

theleſs,

theleſs, after the loſs of the battle in which he was killed, he mounted a mule to make his eſcape.* Solomon, who could afford very great expences, ſent to Egypt for a large number of horſes, and kept to the amount of forty thouſand, with twelve thouſand chariots.† Theſe chariots of war were probably like thoſe of the Greeks, that is to ſay, ſmall, with two wheels, carrying a man or two, ſtanding up, and leaning on the fore-part. The following Kings could not afford the great expence Solomon was at; but, from time to time, ſought aid from Egypt; and on theſe occaſions, cavalry is always mentioned. The Jews muſt have had no cavalry in the time of Ezechias, as Rabſaces inſolently ſaid to them: *Come into the ſervice of my Maſter, the King of Aſſyria, and I will give thee two thouſand horſes; ſee if thou haſt men able to mount them.*‡

The ſcripture no where informs me of any particulars relative to their evolutions, the form of their battalions, or the general order of battle; though it often ſpeaks of troops in battle array: but as to the art of encamping and marching in good order, the journey through the deſert, under Moſes, furniſhes an illuſtrious inſtance of both. The number of this prodigious army was known by exact muſter-rolls. Each man was ranged in his own tribe, each tribe in its particular quarters, under one of the four principal ones, according to the order of the birth

* 2 Kings xv. 1. Ibid. xviii. 9. † Ibid. iv. 26. 2 Chron. ix. 25. ‡ 4 Kings xviii. 23.

of

of the Patriarchs, and the quality of their mothers.* They marched by ſound of trumpet, keeping always the ſame order, and encamping in the ſame ſituation, with the Ark of the Covenant in the center. Great care was taken to keep their quarters clean—a thing very neceſſary in ſo hot a country, and ſo difficult with ſuch a great multitude.† In a word, we ſee that the order of encampments, amongſt the Greeks and Romans, which we ſo juſtly admire, was taken, like every thing elſe, from the models of the eaſtern nations. The Hebrews ſet a high value on ſpoils and booty, like all the ancients: they were marks of honour.

From the time of Joſue to that of the Kings, the command of the army belonged to thoſe who were choſen by the people for that purpoſe, or whom God raiſed up in an extraordinary manner, ſuch as Othoniel, Barac, and Gedeon; but they were only obeyed by that part of the people, who had choſen them, or to whom God had given them as deliverers. The reſt of the people, abuſing their liberty, were often expoſed to the inſults of their enemies. For this reaſon they deſired to have a King, not only to adminiſter juſtice to them, but to take on himſelf the chief command of the army, and to wage war for them.‡ And indeed, from that time they enjoyed greater ſecurity. The King aſſembled the people, whenever he thought proper, and always kept a certain number of

* Numb. i. 2, &c. † Numb. v. 2, &c. Deut. xxii. 10, 11, &c. ‡ 1 Kings viii. 20.

troops on foot. It is remarked of Saul, at the beginning of his reign, that he kept a ſtanding army of three thouſand men.* David had twelve corps of twenty-four thouſand each, who ſerved by the month, each in its turn.† Joſaphat had not the third part of David's kingdom, and yet he had eleven hundred and ſixty thouſand men, all good troops, ready at hand, beſides the garriſons of his ſtrong places.

§ XXVII.—KINGS.

THE King had power of life and death, and could put criminals to death without any of the formalities of law. David made uſe of this power againſt the man who boaſted that he had killed Saul,‡ and thoſe who had aſſaſſinated Iſboſeth.§ The Roman Emperors had alſo the ſame power. The Kings of the Iſraelites levied tribute on the Iſraelites themſelves, ſince Saul promiſed an exemption therefrom to the whole family of the man, who would fight Golias;‖ and it ſeems Solomon levied exceſſive ones, from the complaints made to Roboam.¶ In other reſpects, however, the power of the Kings was very much limited. They were obliged to obſerve the law like private people; they could neither derogate from it, nor add to it; and there is not a ſingle inſtance of a

* Kings xiii. 2. † 1 Chron. xxvii. ‡ 2 Kings i. 15. § Ibid. iv. 12. ‖ 1 Kings xvii. 25. ¶ 3 Kings xii. 4.

new

new law made by any of them. Their manner of living at home was ſufficiently plain and ſimple. This we ſee by the deſcription Samuel gives of the manners of the Kings, to put the people out of conceit with them; for he gives them only women for all the domeſtic employments about their perſon.* They had, however, a number of attendants, when they appeared in public. Among other marks of Abſalom's revolt, the ſcripture reckons fifty men to go before him:† and the ſame is ſaid of his brother Adonias.‡

Theſe Kings lived in a frugal manner like private people; the difference was that they had more lands and larger flocks. In the enumeration of David's wealth, there are indeed reckoned treaſures of gold and ſilver; ſo alſo are reckoned his lands in tillage, his vine-yards, his ſtores of wine and oil, his groves of olive-trees and fig-trees, droves of oxen, camels, aſſes and flocks of ſheep.§ Homer deſcribes the wealth of Ulyſſes in much the ſame manner. He gives him on the continent twelve large droves of each ſpecies of cattle, beſides what he had on his own iſland.‖ They drew from theſe large ſtocks whatever was neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence of their houſehold. In Solomon's time twelve Intendants were diſtributed over the whole land of Iſrael, who ſent, in their turns, each in his month, proviſions for the table, amounting, every day, to thirty mea-

* 1 Kings viii. 13. † 2 Kings xv. 1. ‡ 3 Kings i. 5.
§ 1 Chron. xxvii. 25, &c. ‖ Odyſſ. xiv.

ſures of fine flour, threeſcore meaſures of meal, thirty oxen and a hundred ſheep, &c.* which is enough to feed, at leaſt, five thouſand people. As theſe proviſions were in ſpecie and the produce of the country itſelf, there was no need of buying any thing, and conſequently no need of Purveyors, Treaſurers, Comptrollers, nor of that number of people different in employments, who eat up the great Lords; ſo that gold and ſilver were either laid by, or employed in their moſt natural uſe, for plate and ornaments.

Hence came the immenſe riches of David and Solomon.† David prepared whatever was neceſſary towards the building of the Temple, the expences of which amounted to an hundred and eight talents of gold, and a million, ten thouſand talents of ſilver:‡ which, in French monry amounts to eleven thouſand ſix hundrend and ſixty-nine millions, ſix hundred and ſixty-eight thouſand livres, and ſomewhat more; or five hundred and ten millions, five hundred and forty-ſeven thouſand, nine hundred and ſeventy-five pounds ſterling. He beſides cauſed great treaſures to be laid up in his ſepulchre. Solomon built ſeveral palaces, fortified ſeveral towns, and made many public works. All the plate and furniture of his houſe at Libanus was of pure gold; without counting two hundred targets

* 3 Kings iv. 7. Ibid. 22, &c. † 1 Chron. xxix.
‡ Ibid. xxii. 14.

of

of gold, each of which was worth thirteen thouſand livres, or, five hundred and ſixty-eight pounds, fifteen ſhillings ſterling; and three hundred bucklers, worth above ſix thouſand livres each, or two hundred and ſixty-two pounds, ten ſhillings ſterling.*

His revenues, in effect, were very great. Commerce alone brought him in yearly ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix talents of gold, which make above forty three millions of livres, or above one million eight hundred and eighty-one thouſand, two hundred and fifty pounds ſterling. He made the Iſraelites pay him tribute, as likewiſe all the foreign nations that were ſubject to him, the Hevites, the Amorites, and the other ancient inhabitants of the land of Iſrael; the Idumeans alſo, and a great part of Arabia, and all Syria: for his Empire extended from the entrance of Egypt to the Euphrates. And from all theſe rich countries every year were ſent veſſels of gold and ſilver, different ſorts of cloth, arms, perfumes, horſes and mules. Theſe ſame reflections may enable us to conceive from whence Crœſus, in a ſtate of nearly the ſame extent as Solomon's, got all his riches. Gold and ſilver were not as yet ſo much diſperſed over the world. There was very little in Greece, none at all in Italy or the reſt of Europe, except Spain, where there were mines.

Let us ſtop a little to conſider this proſpe-

* The whole amount, therefore, of the Targets and Bucklers, was one hundred and ninety-two thouſand, five hundred pounds ſterling.

rity of Solomon: for indeed the ſight of it is pleaſing. Read all the hiſtories of the world, you will no where find ſuch an aſſemblage of all the bleſſings that can be taſted on earth. A young Prince in the flower of his age, of a handſome perſon, of great natural parts, of great learning and abilities, with ſuch a reputation, that all the Kings of the earth ſent to hear him as a prodigy of wiſdom,* and a Queen came in perſon, from a great diſtance, to ſee him.† He was ſovereign of a large territory in profound peace, reſiding in the fineſt country in the whole world, moſt magnificently lodged, with a numerous attendance, abounding in riches, ſwimming in pleaſures, refuſing himſelf nothing, as he himſelf owns,‡ and applying all his great natural parts to the gratification of his deſires. This is what we ſhould call a *happy man*, according to our natural ideas; but it is certain he was not ſo, ſince he was not content. He himſelf tells us ſo: *I found pleaſure and joy to be deceit, and ſaw that all my works were nothing but vanity and affliction of mind.*§

In this proſperity of Solomon and his people, God has given mankind two important pieces of inſtruction at the ſame time. Firſt, he has ſhewn his fidelity in accompliſhing his promiſes, beſtowing, in ſo liberal a manner, on the Iſraelites all the good things he had promiſed their fathers, in the poſſeſſion of

* 3 Kings x. 24. † Ibid. 1. ‡ Eccleſ. ii. 10.
§ Ibid.

that

that land; to the end that none might hereafter doubt of his being able to reward thoſe who ſtick cloſe to him, and keep his commandments. Men, whoſe minds were entirely bent on what was an object of ſenſe, ſtood in need of ſuch a pledge as this, to believe, one day, bleſſings that are inviſible, and the recompences of a life to come. But beſides, by granting the Iſraelites the enjoyment of theſe ſenſible bleſſings, and heaping on them, with profuſion, whatever could conſtitute the felicity of this life, God has given all mankind an opportunity of undeceiving themſelves with regard to theſe temporal bleſſings, and of forming more ſublime hopes. For who can pretend to happineſs under the ſun, if Solomon was not ſo? Who can doubt, but, whatever paſſes here, is vanity, after he himſelf acknowledges it to be ſo? Does not his example ſhew us clearly that temporal bleſſings are not only vain, but alſo dangerous; not only incapable of ſatisfying the heart of man, but likely to corrupt it? What reaſon have we to flatter ourſelves that we ſhall make a better uſe of them than that darling people of God, and ſo well inſtructed by him, andwho ſeem to have a better title to theſe bleſſings, ſince they were propoſed to them as a reward? What raſhneſs would it be to imagine that we ſhould be able to withſtand the allurements of pleaſure with more reſolution than the wiſe Solomon? He abandoned himſelf ſo far to the love of women, as to keep a thouſand of them, contrary to the expreſs prohibition of the law of

God:

God*: and the complaiſance he had towards them, drew him even into Idolatry. His ſubjects followed his bad example, and, from his reign, the manners of the Iſraelites became more and more corrupted.

The diviſion of the two kingdoms of Iſrael and Juda ſtill farther increaſed the evil. The corruption was far the greateſt in Iſrael, where Idolatry, the ſource of all ſorts of crimes, continued to reign:† rebellions and treaſons were there very frequent. In Juda the crown departed not from the houſe of David: ſeveral of the kings were pious: the Prieſts and Levites, who all withdrew thither, preſerved there the practice of the law in greater purity, together with the tradition of the true Religion.

In theſe latter times, the law being deſpiſed, an intercourſe with ſtrangers became more frequent, particularly to procure aſſiſtance in their wars: and this was the ground of the reproaches the Prophets made them, for their want of confidence in God. The ſtrangers whoſe alliance they chiefly ſought, were the Aſſyrians and the Egyptians, the two moſt powerful nations at that time. To ingratiate themſelves with them, they imitated their manners and their idolatry; and the ruin of the Iſraelites followed the fate of thoſe nations, when Egypt fell, and Aſſyria got the ſuperiority.

* Deut. xvii. 17. † Wiſd. xiv. 27.

§ XXVIII.

§ XXVIII.—PART III.

JEWS. The CAPTIVITY.

THIS is what appeared to me the moſt remarkable in the manners of the Iſraelites, while they enjoyed their full liberty in their own country, without being intermixed with ſtrangers, or ſubject to Infidels. Let us now take a view of their laſt ſtate, from the captivity of Babylon to their final and total diſperſion. Although they were ſtill the ſame people, and retained, in the main, the ſame manners, there is, however, ſome conſiderable difference in them to be obſerved.

Firſt, they are called, in theſe latter times, by no other name but that of *Jews*, becauſe, in fact, the Kingdom of Juda alone then ſubſiſted. When Jeruſalem was ruined, Samaria had been ſo above a century before, when Salmanaſar had carried away the ten tribes, who had gotten the name of Iſrael. And although the Kingdom of Juda compriſed the whole Tribes of Benjamin and Levi, beſides ſeveral individuals of all the others, whom zeal for Religion had drawn over to them ever ſince the ſchiſm of Jeroboam; all diſtinction was taken away under the name of *Juda* and *Jews*; and they had been accuſtomed to this name even before the Captivity.*

* 4 Kings xvi. 6.

From

From the death of Joſias, as the Kingdom was evidently tending to ruin, a great number of Jews diſperſed themſelves on every ſide, and withdrew to ſettle amongſt the Ammontes, the Moabites, the Idumeans, and other neighbouring nations.* Of thoſe who were in Jeruſalem at the time of its being taken, the Chaldæans carried away the moſt conſiderable into Captivity, and left only the pooreſt amongſt them to cultivate the ground: and even theſe went into Egypt a little time after.†

As to thoſe who were carried away to Babylon, the ſcripture aſſures us, they became ſlaves to the King and his children: for ſuch was then the law of war.‡ All who were taken in arms, all the inhabitants of a city taken by ſtorm, or which had ſurrendered at diſcretion, as alſo thoſe of the flat country that depended on it, were made ſlaves to the Conqueror. They became either the property of the public, or of the perſon who had taken them, according to the laws eſtabliſhed in each country, for the acquiſition and diſtribution of the booty. Thus, at the taking of Troy, all who were left alive, were made ſlaves, even to Queen Hecuba and the Princeſſes her daughters.

The Greek and Roman hiſtories are full of the like inſtances. The Romans put in irons the Kings who had made an obſtinate reſiſtance, and put them to death, after they had led them in triumph. They ſold the

* Jer. xli. 10. † Ibid. xlii. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20.

common

common people by auction, and diſtributed the lands among their own citizens, whom they ſent thither to ſettle colonies. This undoubtedly was the way to ſecure their conqueſts. Neither the Jews nor Iſraelites were ſo harſh y treared by the Aſſyrians. Some of them enjoyed great liberty, as did Tobias under Salmanaſar: and ſome of them were rich, as were Tobias himſelf, his kinſman Raguel, and his friend Gabelus;* and at Babylon Joachim, the huſbahd of Suſanna.† It appears alſo from this hiſtory of Suſanna, that the Jews, tho' in a ſtate of captivity, had the free exerciſe of their law; even ſo far as to appoint Judges, in caſes of life and death.

It was impoſſible, however, but that this intermixture with ſtrangers ſhould introduce a great change in their manners, ſince one of their principal maxims was to avoid any intercourſe with all other nations. Many were prevailed on to adore idols, to eat forbidden meats, and to marry foreign women: and all conformed to their maſters in things indifferent, ſuch as language. Thus in the ſpace of ſeventy years, which was the duration of the captivity, they forgot the Hebrew; and from that time it was underſtood only by the learned, as the Latin is amongſt us. Their vulgar tongue was the Syriac or Chaldaic, ſuch as it is in Daniel, and the Paraphraſes of the ſcripture, which were afterwards made, that the people might be

* Tob. i. 14. † Dan. xli.

able

able to underſtand it. They changed alſo their letters: inſtead of the ancient form, which the Samaritans retained, they took that of the Chaldæans, which we call Hebrew letters.

§ XXIX.——Return of the JEWS. Their STATE and CONDITION under the PERSIANS.

WHEN Cyrus had granted them their liberty, and permiſſion to return to Judæa and rebuild the Temple, they neither all returned, nor at the ſame time. A great many remained at Babylon, and in all other places where they were ſettled. They who returned were not all Jews; ſome few of the other Tribes were joined to them: and the whole of them together made but a ſmall number. The firſt, under the conduct of Jorobabel, did not amount to fifty thouſand, ſlaves included: and their poverty may be ſeen by the ſmall number of their ſlaves and cattle.* What compariſon is there between fifty thouſand ſouls, and the number requiſite, in the time of Joſaphat, to raiſe an army of twelve hundred thouſand fighting men? About fifteen hundred more returned with Eſdras:† and we may ſuppoſe that ſeveral other companies would alſo return.

They did what they could to diſtinguiſh their ancient inheritance, and to preſerve

* 1 Eſd. ii. 64. † Ib. viii.

what

what had been the lot of their family. For that purpose Esdras collected all those Genealogies, which are at the beginning of Chronicles, and where he chiefly enlarges on the three Tribes of Juda, Levi and Benjamin, and carefully points out their respective habitations. To people Jerusalem, all were admitted, who would settle there;* which could not but cause some confusion in their respective allotments. Moreover it was just, that those who were present should occupy the lands of such as refused to return, or were not to be found. Thus, in the latter times, St Joseph lived at Nazareth in Galilee, though his family was originally of Bethlehem: and Anne, the Prophetess, although of the Tribe of Aser, lived at Jerusalem. But they still knew to what Tribe they belonged, and they had preserved their genealogies, as we see by that of St Joseph, though he was only a poor Artificer. They carefully distinguished the true Israelites from the strangers admitted amongst them, whom they called in their own tongue, *Gizres*, and *Proselytes* in Greek.†

Hence one of their first concerns after their return was to separate themselves from strangers, and to see that the prohibitions in the Law, with regard to intermarrying with unbelievers, were duly observed.‡ They even extended these prohibitions to the nations the Law had not included in them; to the

* 2 Esdr. xi. 3. † African. ap. Euf. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.
‡ 1 Esdr. ix. 2 Esd. ix.

people of Azotus, who were a part of the Philiſtines; to the Egyptians, Ammonites and Moabites. The experience the Iſraelites had of the evils ariſing from theſe marriages, after the bad example ſet by Solomon, induced the Wiſemen thus to interpret the law, and carry it beyond the letter, to fulfil more effectually the intention of it. The Prieſts were the moſt exact obſervers of theſe prohibitions; they married none but women of their own Tribe; and Joſephus ſhews us the precautions taken in this reſpect in his time.* Never were the Jews, in general, ſo faithful to God; and, after their return from the captivity, we hear no more of their Idolatry—ſuch an impreſſion had the ſeverity of that chaſtiſement, and the accompliſhment of all the prophecies which had denounced it, made on their minds. The Apoſtates, it is true, had liberty to go and live amongſt the unbelievers; ſo that none appeared to be Jews but ſuch as were really ſo.

Under the firſt Perſian Kings, they were in a very weak condition; envied by the ſtrangers their neighbours, eſpecially the Samaritans, expoſed to their inſults and calumnies; and liable to have their throats cut by their enemies, at the firſt orders of the great King, as appears by the cruel edict, which Aman obtained againſt them, the execution of which Eſther prevented.† They could not finiſh the building of the Temple, till twenty years after their firſt return; and

* Contr. App. l. 1. c. 2. † Eſth. iii. 8, &c.

the

the raiſing the walls of Jeruſalem took up ſixty years more, ſo that fourſcore years elapſed before their work was completed. The country muſt have been extremely poor, ſince Herodotus,* who lived at the ſame time, includes Syria, Phœnicia, Paleſtine, and the Iſland of Cyprus in one only government, which paid Darius no more than a tribute of three hundred and fifty talents, like one of the leaſt provinces: whereas that of Babylon alone paid a thouſand. This revenue was doubled, in the time of the Romans, for Paleſtine alone; and it brought in to Herod and his children ſeven hundred and ſixty talents,† which make above fifteen hundred thouſand livres, reckoning by the ſmaller talent; or ſeventy-five thouſand pounds ſterling.

The Jews, by little and little, recovered themſelves, and during the remainder of the reign of the Perſians, they lived according to their own laws, in the form of a Republic governed by the High Prieſt and the council of ſeventy-one Elders. The country was repeopled, the cities rebuilt, and the lands better cultivated than ever. Plenty returned once more; and there was ſuch a profound peace and tranquillity, that, for near the ſpace of three hundred years, no diſturbance happened among them, or any thing that makes the common ſubject of hiſtory: and from hence comes that great chaſm in their hiſtory which we find between the

* Herod. l. iii. † Joſ. Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 4.

time of Nehemias and the Maccabees. The Temple of God was honoured even by ſtrangers, who viſited it, and brought their offerings thither.* In a word, ſuch was the proſperity of the Jewiſh ſtate after their return, that the Prophets foretelling it, have left us the moſt magnificent repreſentative types of the reign of the Meſſias.

The Greeks began, at this time, to become firſt acquainted with the Jews in Egypt and Syria, where they often travelled; and they turned this intercourſe with them to their own great advantage, if we believe the ancient Chriſtian writers, as St Juſtin and St Clement of Alexandria: for they poſitively aſſert that the Poets, Legiſlators and Philoſophers of the Greeks had learned from the Jews, all that was valuable in what they taught. In fact, Solon travelled into Egypt, and the laws he gave the Athenians had a great affinity to thoſe of Moſes. Pythagoras was a long time in Egypt, and went to Babylon in the time of Cambyſes: he had, therefore, ſeen ſome Jews, and might have diſcourſed with them. Plato ſtudied many years in Egypt; and makes Socrates ſay ſo many excellent things, grounded on the principles taught by Moſes, that there is room to ſuſpect that he had a knowledge of them.

The Jews reduced to practice the beſt things he propoſes either in his Republic or his laws, that is to ſay, that every man ſhould live by his labour, a ſtranger to lux-

* Philo. Leg.

ury

ury and ambition, without having it in his power either to impoveriſh or enrich himſelf too much, looking on Juſtice as the greateſt of all bleſſings, avoiding all novelty and change. We ſee in the perſon of Moſes, David and Solomon examples of that ſage, whom he wiſhed for to govern a ſtate and render it happy, and ſuch as he durſt ſcarce hope for, through the whole ſucceſſion of all ages. He mentions, in ſeveral places,* without ſupporting them with any proofs, ſome traditions, whoſe antiquity he reſpects, and which are manifeſtly ſcraps of the true doctrine, relating to a judgment after death, and a future ſtate.† If Plato and the other Greeks did not learn theſe great truths immediately from the Jews, they had learnt them, at leaſt, from other nations of the Eaſt, who being nearer the ſource of mankind, and having writings much more ancient than the Greeks, had preſerved much better traditions from the firſt men, though wrapped up in a multitude of fables.

§ XXX.—The STATE of the JEWS under the MACEDONIANS.

THE Conqueſts of Alexander made the Jews ſtill better known to the Greeks, whoſe ſubjects they were now become. Joſephus ‡ brings proofs of this from the teſtimonies of Clearchus, a diſciple of Ariſto-

* Plato de Rep. vi. † Ibid. vi. ‡ 1 Contra App. 9.

tle, and of Hecatæus of Abdera. They continued to live according to their own laws, under the protection of the Macedonian Princes, as they had done under the Perſians. But as their country lay between the territories of the Kings of Syria and thoſe of Egypt, they ſometimes obeyed the Syrians and ſometimes the Egyptians, according as either of thoſe Princes became the ſtronger; and they were well or ill uſed, according to the humour or intereſt of the Kings, and the credit of their enemies.* Alexander the Great, convinced of their affection and fidelity to him, beſtowed on them the province of Samaria, and exempted it from tribute; and when he built Alexandria, he ſettled ſome Jews therein, with the ſame privileges the other citizens enjoyed; ſo that they bore alſo the name of *Macedonians*. It is true, that the firſt of the Ptolomies, having taken Jeruſalem by ſurpriſe, carried a great number of Jews captives into Egypt,† and diſperſed them as far as Cyrene.‡ But afterwards, knowing how religious and faithful they were in obſerving their oaths, he placed ſome of them in garriſons, and treated them ſo well, that he drew ſeveral more over to him. His ſon Philadelphus ranſomed all the Jews, who were ſlaves in his territories, and ſent large preſents to Jeruſalem, in favour of the tranſlation he ordered to be made of their law.§

* 1 Contra App. 2. † Joſ. xii. Ant. 1. Contra App. 2. & 1. ‡ Joſ. Ant. l. 2. § 12. Ant. 2.

They

They were alſo greatly favoured by ſeveral of the Kings of Syria. Seleucus Nicanor made them denizons of the cities he built in Aſia Minor, and the lower Syria, even of Antioch, the capital, with privileges, which continued the ſame under the Romans. Antiochus the Great, having received ſignal ſervices from the Jews, granted ſeveral immunities and conſiderable favours to the city of Jeruſalem; and, in order to ſecure to himſelf Lydia and Phrygia, which were not ſufficiently ſtaunch in their allegiance to him, he eſtabliſhed there colonies of Jews, giving them room to build on, and lands to cultivate.*

The firſt privilege the Jews always aſked, on theſe occaſions, was the free exerciſe of their religion and the obſervance of their law. But, in other reſpects, they could not well avoid following the manners of the Greeks in many points, as they had thoſe of the Chaldæans and others: and eſpecially they were obliged to talk the Greek tongue, which was then become common all over the Eaſt, and continued to be ſo, while the Roman empire laſted. Hence ſeveral of them took Greek names, as Ariſtobulus, Philo, Andrew, Philip, or gave their Hebrew names a Greek ſound and termination, as Jaſon for Jeſus, Simon for Simeon, Hieroſolyma for Jeruſalem.

It was probably about this time that the Jews croſſed the ſeas and ſettled in Europe.

* Joſ. Ant. 3.

For

For thoſe who underſtood Greek, and had been accuſtomed to live with the Greeks in Aſia, Syria and Egypt, might eaſily live in any part of the Grecian Empire, even in Macedonia and Achaia, according as they found more convenience and liberty. And indeed we ſee that St Paul found a great number in all the Greek cities, when he went thither to preach the Goſpel, about two hundred and fifty years after the time of Antiochus the Great. Theſe were the Jews, become half Greeks, whom the Jews of the Eaſt called *Helleniſts*; and they appropriated to the Gentiles the name of *Hellenes*, which properly ſignifies Grecians; ſo that in the writings of St Paul, Greek and Gentile is the ſame thing.*

The Jews could not live thus intermixed with the Greeks, but that the latter, curious as they then were, muſt know a great deal of their religion and laws, particularly after the tranſlation of their ſacred books. The wiſe men and true Philoſophers ſet a high value on them, as we may judge from what Strabo wrote on them, a long time after. All were ſtruck with the magnificence of the temple, and the beautiful order of their ceremonies. Agrippa himſelf, ſon-in-law to Phil. Auguſtus, admired it.† But the greateſt part of the Greeks of that time, I mean in the reign of the Macedonians, were not capable of reliſhing the manners and maxims of the Jews. They were too grave for men render-

* Rom. i. 16. ii. 10, &c. † Strabo l. xvi.

ed

ed effeminate by Aſiatic luxury, and whoſe employment was about trifles.* There was, indeed, a great number of Philoſophers among them; but the greateſt part contented themſelves with diſcourſing on virtue, and diſputing with great warmth on the ſubject. The reſt of the Greeks were extravagantly curious and fond of the fine arts. One gave himſelf up to the ſtudy of Rhetoric, another to that of Poetry, another to Muſic: Painters, Sculptors and Architects were greatly eſteemed among them. Others followed only the exerciſes of the Gymnaſium, to form their bodies and to become good Athletes. Others employed themſelves wholly in the ſtudy of Aſtronomy, and Phyſics: and were nothing elſe but a ſet of learned men, great geniuſes, and idle people of all ſorts.

The manners of the † Romans were at that time much more ſolid. They applied only to Agriculture, Juriſprudence and war, and willingly left to the Greeks the glory of ſucceeding in the fine arts, and curious ſciences, while they confined themſelves to making of conqueſts and governing nations, making this, as Virgil ſays, a capital point of their Politics.‡ But the ſerious diſpoſition of the Jews went ſtill farther, ſince they made morality, and the

* Ut primum poſitis nugari Græcia bellis Cæpit, &c. Horat 3. Ep. i.

† Romæ dulce diu fuit et ſolemne recluſa mane domo vigilare, &c. ib. 103.

‡ Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius æra. Æneid. vi. 847.

ſervice

ſervice of God, their chief ſtudy. We have a fine inſtance of this in the book of Eccleſiaſticus, written about this time.* It was this, however, that made the Greeks conſider them as an ignorant people, who wiſhed to know nothing but their own law. They called them *Barbarians*, a name they beſtowed on all who were not Greeks, and deſpiſed them more than any other ſtrangers, on account of their Religion, which appeared to them gloomy and abſurd.† They ſaw the Jews refrain from all riot and exceſs, not through œconomy and policy, but thro' a motive of conſcience. This appeared to them too ſevere; and they were eſpecially diſpleaſed with their reſt of the Sabbath, their faſts and diſtinction of meats.

They were looked upon as the enemies of all mankind. They lived ſeparate from all others, ſaid a Greek Philoſopher, having nothing in common with us, neither table, nor libations, nor Prieſts, nor ſacrifices. They are farther from us than the inhabitants of Suſa, Bactria, or India.‡

Add, moreover, that their abhorrence of Idolatry made them reject ſculpture and painting, the two darling arts of the Greeks.§ They deſpiſed ſtatues as uſeleſs pieces of workmanſhip, and objects of ridicule, and the fruits of great idleneſs: and hence, in

* Jeſ. cont. App. l. i. c. 4. &c. l. ii. c. 6. Orig. in Cels. l. v.

† Judæorum mos triſtis abſurduſque. Tac. Hiſt. v.

‡ Philoſt. l. iv. c. 11.

th[e]

the ſcripture, Idols are called *Vanity*, to ſhew that they are vain things, that only have a deceitful appearance, and are of no uſe.* They are alſo called *abominations*, becauſe they cannot be ſufficiently deteſted, if we conſider the blindneſs of thoſe who attribute to them the incommunicable name of God. For the ſame reaſon the Jews could not hear, without horror, the impious fables, of which the Greek Poets were full: they incurred conſequently the hatred of the Grammarians, who got a living by explaining them; and of the Rhapſodiſts, whoſe trade it was to ſing heroic Poems in public; of the actors of Tragedies and Comedies, and all others, whoſe livelihood and reputation depended on Poetry, and a falſe Theology.†

The Jews, it is true, made it a rule amongſt them not to ridicule other nations, nor to ſpeak ill of their Gods:‡ but it was very difficult not to let ſlip ſome word of contempt. Now what muſt the rage of a Greek Grammarian be, if he ſhould hear a Jew repeat ſome paſſage out of the Prophets againſt Idols: if he ſaw Homer treated like a falſe Prophet or impoſtor, the abſurdities of the genealogy of their Gods, their amours and crimes expoſed? How could they bear them to deteſt the ſcandalous lewdneſs of their Theatres, and the abominable ceremonies of Bacchus and Ceres: or, in a word, to hear

* Orig. in Celſ. Iſ. liv. 10. Jer. x. 15. Wiſd. xiii. 13.
† Plato. ‡ Joſ. in App.

them

them maintain that their God was the only true God, and that they alone, of all the nations in the world, knew the truth with regard to Religion and Morals? They were the leſs hearkened to, as they neither could make fine harangues, nor diſpute in form; and as a proof of theſe great truths, they alledged nothing but facts, that is the great miracles God had performed in the ſight of their Fathers. Now the common people among the Greeks made no difference between theſe miracles and the prodigies they related out of their own fables; and the Philoſophers * believed them impoſſible, becauſe they reaſoned only from the laws of nature, which they thought to be neceſſary by an abſolute neceſſity.

With theſe diſpoſitions the Greeks eaſily gave ear to the calumnies of the Phenicians, the Egyptians, and the other enemies of the Jews.† And from thence came thoſe ſilly ſtories, ſo gravely told by Tacitus,‡ when he pretends to explain the origin of the Jews, and act the learned hiſtorian; and which we alſo ſee in Juſtin, who had drawn them from the ſame ſources. Strabo, though he ſpeaks more decently, does not ſeem to have had any better information.

But beſides theſe lies, which might be eaſily deſpiſed, the Greeks from thence proceeded to violences and perſecutions. Thus Ptolemy Philopator, after he had loſt the bat-

* Galen de uſu Part. † Contr. App. i. 2.
‡ Tacit. v. Hiſt.

tle

tle of Raphia, vented his revenge on them: and his ſon, Epiphanes, provoked at his being hindered from entering the ſanctuary, determined to expoſe them to Elephants, as related in the third book of Machabees. Under Seleucus Philopator, King of Syria, Heliodorus came to plunder the ſacred treaſure, and was only prevented from doing it by a miracle.* Laſtly, under Antiochus Epiphanes,† began the greateſt perſecution they had ever ſuffered, and which abated nothing of thoſe the Chriſtians ſuffered afterwards. Thoſe, therefore, who died at that time for the law of God, the Church reckons amongſt her Martyrs.‡

Theſe are the firſt we know of, who died for that good cauſe. The three companions of Daniel, when they were caſt into the furnace; and Daniel himſelf, when expoſed to the lions, had all the merit of martyrdom; but God wrought miracles to preſerve them.§ Eleazar, the ſeven brethren, and others mentioned in the hiſtory of the Machabees, effectually laid down their lives for God and the law of their fathers: and this is the firſt inſtance I know, in the hiſtory of the whole world, of this kind of virtue. We ſee not, before this time, any unbeliever, not even any Philoſopher, who choſe rather to ſuffer death and the moſt cruel torments, than to violate the religion and laws of his country.

Joſephus ‖ boldly reproaches the heathens

* 2 Mach. iii. 7, &c. † 1 Mach. i. 1, &c. ‡ Martyr. Rom. Aug. 1. § Dan. iii. 21, &c. ‖ Cont. App. l. i.

with it. "Many captives of our nation, says "he, have suffered all sorts of death and "torments in your Theatres and on other oc-"casions, rather than utter the least word "against the law and the other scriptures. "And where is the Greek, who would not "rather suffer all his books to be burnt, than "to suffer the least hurt himself?"

It is true, indeed, that some Jews yielded to persecution: but these totally renounced their Religion and their laws, so as to use some art to disguise their circumcision: they were, therefore, no longer reckoned as Jews. And those, who remained faithful, were so zealous for their law and liberty, that, at last, they took up arms in defence of them against the Kings of Syria. These Princes openly violated all the privileges which had been granted the Jews by the Kings of Persia, and confirmed by Alexander, and the other Macedonian Kings: and they endeavoured to abolish the true Religion, which was, as yet, confined to a particular people, and a particular country.

§ XXXI.—Reign of the ASSAMONEANS.

WE are now then come to the time of the Machabees, when the Jewish nation rose again, and with a new lustre. They were no longer that set of poor people, who sought only to live in peace, under the direction of their Elders and their High Priest, perfectly happy in the liberty they enjoyed

of

of cultivating their lands, and ſerving the God of heaven after their own way. They became an independent ſtate, had good troops and fortified towns to defend themſelves, and formed alliances, not only with neighbouring Princes, but diſtant ſtates, and even Rome itſelf.* The Kings of Egypt and Syria, who had uſed them ſo ill, were forced afterwards to court their friendſhip. The Jews even made ſome conqueſts. John Hyrcanus took Sichem and Garizim, and deſtroyed the Temple of the Samaritans---Such was his abſolute power throughout the whole land of Iſrael. He extended his conqueſts ſtill farther, in Syria, where he conquered ſeveral towns, after the death of Antiochus Sidetes: and in Idumea, which he entirely ſubdued; even ſo far as to oblige the Idumeans to receive circumciſion and obſerve the law of Moſes, as being incorporated with the Jewiſh nation.† His ſon, Ariſtobulus, added the enſigns of royalty to the effective power thereof, taking the diadem and title of King: and Alexander Jannæus made alſo ſeveral conqueſts.‡

But this glory of the Jews was of ſhort duration. For whereas the Kingdoms of Egypt and Syria becoming weak, had ſerved to raiſe them, the entire ruin of thoſe two kingdoms brought on theirs, by the immenſe increaſe of the Roman power. Their deſtruction, indeed, began by their domeſtic diviſions,

* 1 Mach. xiv. 4, 18. † Joſ. Ant. xiii. 17.

‡ Ibid. c. 20, 21, 22.

and by the continual miſunderſtanding that ſubſiſted between the two ſons of Alexander Jannæus, Hyrcanus and Ariſtobulus. In a word they enjoyed liberty only the ſpace of fourſcore years, from the time when Simon was declared Chief of the nation,* after having ſhaken off the yoke of the Greeks; until Pompey, called by Hyrcanus, took Jeruſalem, entered the Temple, and made the Jews tributaries.

They were, after this, in a miſerable ſituation upwards of twenty years, divided by the factions of the two brothers, and plundered by the Romans, who drew from them above forty millions of livres, or two millions ſterling, at different times.† After the defeat of Brutus and Caſſius, the Parthians taking advantage of the weakneſs of Mark Anthony, who governed the Eaſt, made themſelves maſters of Syria and Paleſtine, and led away Hyrcanus into captivity. During the whole time of the civil wars amongſt the Romans, and the advantages the Parthians gained over them, Paleſtine was expoſed to dreadful ravages by the paſſing of ſo many armies of different nations through it, and by the incurſions of the neighbouring nations, particularly the Arabians.

It recovered, it is true, a little under Herod. He brought back peace and plenty: he was powerful: he was rich and magnificent.‡ But it cannot be ſaid, that the Jews

* 1 Mach. xiv. 44. † Joſ. Ant. xiv, 8. 12.
‡ Joſ. Ant. xv.

were

were a free people in his time: as he himſelf was not ſo, but dependent entirely on the Roman Emperors. He was a foreigner, of Idumean extraction, a man without religion, and only kept up the outward appearance of any, as an inſtrument of policy. He deſtroyed the ſucceſſion of the High Prieſts, ſending to Babylon for one Hananel, a deſpicable wretch, though of the ſarcedotal race; after whom there were no High Prieſts, but ſuch as the Kings were pleaſed to appoint, and as many as they pleaſed.*

From the death of Herod, we muſt reckon no longer any power in Judea: his children retained only ſome parts of his kingdom, and did not retain them long. Judæa had Roman Governors, dependent on the Proconſul of Syria. The Jews were at laſt baniſhed from thence, and reduced to the ſtate in which they are ſtill. This, therefore, is the laſt ſtage, in which we are to conſider them as a nation, from their liberty under Simeon and the Aſſamoneans, till their final deſtruction under Veſpaſian. It is a ſpace of four hundred years, which compriſes the greateſt part of the hiſtory of the Machabees, and the whole of that of the New Teſtament: and the manners of the Jews differ conſiderably in this period from what they were before.

* Joſ. Ant. xv. 2.

§ XXXII.—MANNERS of the JEWS of THESE LATTER TIMES.

THESE latter Jews were a mixture of ſeveral nations. There were ſome of them ſettled in every nation under heaven, as the Scripture expreſſes it.* Many came and dwelt in Judea, or, at leaſt, travelled thither, ſometimes out of devotion, to offer ſacrifice in the only Temple, where it was lawful to do it. Moreover, there were always, from time to time, ſome heathens, who were converted, and became Proſelytes. The Jews were therefore no longer, properly ſpeaking, a people by themſelves, uſing the ſame language, and following the ſame cuſtoms: and ſeveral nations began to gather under the ſame religion. Even thoſe who dwelt in the Holy Land, were a mixture of different nations, Idumeans and other Arabians, Phenicians, Syrians and Greeks.

All the Jews, however, conſidered themſelves as brethren, and helped one another, in whatever part of the world they were diſperſed. They exerciſed hoſpitality to all travelling Jews; and aſſiſted the poor of all the provinces, but particularly of Judea. As thoſe who were at a diſtance could not pay in kind the tithes or firſt-offerings, nor come to the Temple to make their offerings on all the feſtivals; they turned into money whatever they owed to God; and theſe contributions, when collected together, formed a

* Acts ii. 5.

which

conſiderable tribute, which every province ſent yearly to Jeruſalem, to defray the expences of the ſacrifices, the maintenance of the Prieſts and the poor.* This is the Jewiſh money Cicero ſpeaks of.†

Theſe Collections continued for ſeveral ages after the deſtruction of the Temple. The Head of each nation, whom they called *Patriarch*, ſent, at certain times, ſome Senators, who commonly reſided near him, and who were called *Apoſtles* or *Envoys*. They went through the provinces, viſiting the Synagogues, inveſted with an authority over thoſe who preſided in them, and over all the Elders and miniſters, and at the ſame time brought back the tribute to the Patriarch.‡ But the Chriſtian Emperors forbade the continuance of it.§ The Patriarchs arrived at this dignity by inheritance, ſo that it often happened that they were children.‖ To return to the times while Jeruſalem ſubſiſted, the Jews had, in the provinces, Heads of their nation, called, in Greek, *Ethnarchs*, who judged according to their law. Thoſe of Egypt were famous amongſt them.¶

In Judea, the Jews were governed, as formerly, by the council of the ſeventy-one Elders, which they called the Sanedrim, from a Greek word corrupted: and theſe are the Elders of the people mentioned in the Goſpel.** In each Synagogue there was a head or a Ruler, as we ſee in the Goſpel. There

* See Joſ. Ant. xiv. 12. † Pro Flacco. ‡ Epiph. Hær. xxxi. 4, 7, 11. § L. 4. Cod. de Judæis. ‖ Hier. in Is. iii. 4. ¶ Strabo, lib. ix. ** Luke xxii. 66, &c.

were

were Prieſts or Elders, and Deacons or Servants, called *Hazanin*, to take care of the Synagogue, and preſent the book to the Doctor or Teacher who inſtructed the people. There were likewiſe in each town twenty-three Judges, as was ſaid before. For it is chiefly to this time we muſt refer whatever the Talmud ſays of the forms of judgments and the execution of juſtice.†

The Jews of Judea ſtill applied themſelves to tillage, the feeding of Cattle, and every branch of huſbandry. There are ſtill ſome medals of the times of the Maccabees, whereon we ſee ears of corn and meaſures, to ſhew the fertility of the country, and the honour they thought it was to cultivate the ground.‡ The ſcripture thus paints the proſperity of the government of Simeon: "Every man tilled his field in quiet. The land of Juda yielded her increaſe, and the trees of the fields their fruit. The Elders ſat in the ſtreets, and treated together of the good of the country, and the young men put on them glory and the robes of war. He made peace in the land, and Iſrael rejoiced with great joy. And every man ſat under his vine and under his fig-tree: and there was none to make them afraid." And the Author* of Eccleſiaſticus, who lived at that time, has not failed to point out that duty. "Hate not, ſays he, laborious

* Luke viii. 41. † Cod. ſang. Maccoth. ‡ See Vales. in Euſ. vii. 10.--Pallad. de vita Chryſoſt. § 1 Mach. xiv. 8. 12.

work,

work, nor huſbandry, which the Moſt High hath ordained."*

The grounds of manners do not change in every nation. There were at this time huſbandmen of good families in Sicily and in Italy: there will always be hunters among the Germanic nations.

Moſt of the parables of the Goſpel are taken from a country-life. A ſower, good ſeed, tares, a vine-yard, the good tree, the unprofitable tree, the ſtrayed ſheep, and the good ſhepherd; and all this very often, when ſpeaking in cities, and in Jeruſalem itſelf. It is true, ſeveral Parables alſo ſhew us that the traffic of money was common among the Jews; that there were Bankers and Uſurers by profeſſion. Many Jews turned Publicans, that is, Farmers of the tributes and taxes, though this employ drew on them the hatred of the public. One famous inſtance is Joſeph the ſon of Tobias, who, under Ptolemy Epiphanes, procured to himſelf the appointment of ceſſing and levying the tributes of all Syria and Phenicia, and acquired thereby immenſe riches.†

If there were Bankers and Collectors of the revenue among the Jews, there is more reaſon to ſuppoſe that there were wholeſale and retail traders. And, in fact, theſe two ſorts of trades are mentioned in the book of Eccleſiaſticus, when the author ſays that they both appeared to him dangerous; that it is hard for a merchant to avoid injuſtice,

* Eccleſ. vii. 15. † Joſ. Ant. xii. 4.

and

and for a retailer not to offend, at leaſt by his tongue.* He goes up to the ſource of the evil; and that ſin is, in a manner, cemented with buying and ſelling.† Thus it is that God recalled his people back to ancient manners, ſhewing them the powerful motives their fathers had for deſpiſing trade.

But they profited little by his inſtructions; and ſince their utter reprobation, they have kept on departing farther and farther from the ſimple and natural manner of ſubſiſting among the Iſraelites, by which they procured their ſubſiſtence. The Jews have had no lands for a long time, nor applied to Agriculture. They live only by trade, and that of the moſt ſordid kind. They buy to ſell again; they are brokers and uſurers. Their whole property conſiſts in money and moveables: they ſcarce have any houſes of their own in cities or towns.

Some apply themſelves to Medicine: and they did ſo in the times I am here ſpeaking of. The author of Eccleſiaſticus likewiſe ſhews this, when he recommends the utility of this art, and that of the compounding of medicines.‡ The Goſpel ſpeaks of a woman, who had ſuffered much from ſeveral phyſicians, and had ſpent all ſhe had in medicines.§ The ſame book of Eccleſiaſticus mentions afterwards the great leiſure the ſtudy of wiſdom requires, which ſeems to ſhew that the Scribes or Doctors of the law

* Eccli. xxvi. 28. † Ibid. xxvii. 2.

‡ Eccli. xxxvii. § Mark v. 26. Luke viii. 43.

made

made it their only occupation :* but it ſhews at the ſame time the neceſſity of handicrafts;† and, in fact, there were ſeveral at that time among the Jews. The Apoſtles, St Joſeph, and JESUS-CHRIST himſelf, are illuſtrious inſtances; and, what is moſt remarkable, St Paul, though brought up to letters, was alſo maſter of a trade. The Jews relate the ſame thing of their moſt famous Rabbins.‡

§ XXXIII.—SECTS and SUPERSTITIONS.

AT this time began the different ſects amongſt them. Under Jonathas the ſon of Mattathias, there were already Phariſees, Sadducees and Eſſenians.§ The Phariſees joined to the text of the law the traditions of the Fathers, which had been preſerved without writing, and maintaining, in the main, the ſame ſound doctrine, they blended many ſuperſtitions therewith. They believed in fate, moderated by free will, or rather in Providence which guides it. The Saducees gave all to free will. They adhered to the letter of the ſcripture, and pretended that it obliged them not to believe either the reſurrection of the dead, the immortality of the ſoul, or the exiſtence of angels or any ſpiritual beings.‖ They ſerved God therefore only from the motive of temporal rewards, and indulged themſelves very much in ſenſual pleaſures.

* Eccleſ. xxxviii. 24. † Ibid. 27, &c. ‡ Talmud.
§ Joſ. Ant. xiii. 9. xviii. 2. ‖ Acts xxiii. 8.

They

They were little united among themſelves, and had little authority with the people. Their number was not great; but it conſiſted of the firſt people of the nation, and of ſeveral even among the Prieſts. The common people favoured more the Phariſees, who ſhewed great outward appearances of piety; and the Queen Alexandra beſtowed on them great power, during the minority of her children.*

The ſect of the Eſſenians was the moſt ſingular. They avoided living in great towns, all they had was in common, and their food was very plain and ſimple. They employed a great deal of time in prayer and meditating on the Law.† Their manner of life greatly reſembled that of the Prophets and the Recabites. Some of them even obſerved continency, and led a life wholly contemplative, and ſo perfect, that ſeveral of the Fathers have taken them for Chriſtians.

The Phariſees lived in the world, in perfect union with one another, leading a plain, and, outwardly, auſtere life; but the greateſt part of them were attached to their own intereſt, were ambitious and greedy of money. They valued themſelves on a great exactneſs in the exterior practice of the Law. They gave tithes not only of the larger produce of the earth, but alſo of the ſmalleſt herbs, ſuch as cummin, mint and millet.‡ They took great care to waſh themſelves, to purify their cups, their plate, and all their

* Joſ. Bell. i. 4. † Ibid. ii. 7. ‡ Matth. xxiii. 23. Mark vii. 2.

furniture.

furniture. They ſo ſcrupulouſly obſerved the Sabbath, that they made the moiſtening a bit of clay at the tip of his finger, a crime in JESUS-CHRIST; and in his diſciples, plucking a few ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath.* They faſted often, many of them twice a week, viz. on Monday and Thurſday.† They affected to wear the *Totaphoth* and the *Zizith* larger than common.‡ The *Totaphoth* or *Thephilim* (*Phylacteria. Fimbriæ*) are ſcraps of writing containing ſome paſſages of the law, faſtened on the forehead and the left arm, according to the command of having the Law of God always before their eyes, or in their hands.§ The *Zizith* are fringes of different colours, which they were ordered to wear at the corners of their clokes, to put them in mind, by the ſight of them, of the commandments of God.‖ The Jews ſtill wear theſe exterior marks of Religion, when they go to the Synagogue; but on working days only. On the Sabbath and feſtivals they pretend they ſtand in no need of theſe, to put them in mind of the commandments of God.**

The Phariſees beſtowed their alms in public, and made their faces yellow to appear greater faſters.†† For a perſon who was unclean to touch them, was reckoned the higheſt affront, and they held not only all Gentiles and public ſinners to be ſuch, but all thoſe who followed any odious profeſſion of

* John ix. 6. Mat. xii. 2. † Luke xviii. 12.
‡ Matth. xxiii. 3. § Deut. vi. 8. ‖ Numb. xv. 38.
** Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. iv. †† Mal. vi. 2. 5, 16.

life: In a word, the greateſt part of them made a ſhow of devotion, only from a motive of intereſt. They ſeduced, by their ſpecious diſcourſes, the ignorant common people and the women, who even ſtripped themſelves of what they had to enrich them;* and under the pretext of their being the people of God, and the depoſitaries of the Law, they deſpiſed the Greeks and Romans, and all other nations of the earth.

We ſtill ſee in the books of the Jews the traditions, of which the Phariſees then made ſuch a myſtery, and which were committed to writing about an hundred years after the reſurrection of JESUS-CHRIST. It is impoſſible for any one, who has been brought up in different principles, to form an idea of the frivolous queſtions theſe books are full of. For inſtance: if it be lawful, on the Sabbath, to get upon an aſs to ride to water, or if you muſt lead it by the halter: if it be lawful to walk over new-ſown ground on that day, on account of the danger there is of carrying away ſome grains of corn with your feet, and conſequently of ſowing them: if it be lawful, on the ſame day, to write as many letters of the Alphabet, as would make any ſenſe: if it be lawful to eat an egg on that day, that was laid on the ſame day. On clearing away the old leaven before the Paſſover: if you muſt begin afreſh to purify the houſe, in caſe you ſhould ſee a mouſe run over the floor, with ſome crumbs

* Matth. ii. 14.

of

of bread. If it be lawful to keep any paſted paper, or a plaiſter that had flour in it. If after having burnt the old leaven, it be lawful to eat any thing that has been dreſſed with the remaining coals in which the leaven had been burnt. And a million of other ſuch caſes of conſcience, with which the Talmud and its Commentaries are filled.*

Thus did the Jews forget the grandeur and majeſty of the Law of God, to confine themſelves to ſuch mean, trifling things; and became ſtupid and ignorant in compariſon of the Greeks, who agitated, in their ſchools, more uſeful and ſublime queſtions, either of natural Philoſophy or Morality; and who were a polite and agreeable people, if not virtuous.

Not but there were always ſome Jews, who, having more curioſity than the reſt, ſtudied to ſpeak Greek properly, read Greek Authors, applied to their ſtudies, ſuch as Grammar, Rhetoric, and Philoſophy. Of this number were Ariſtobulus, a Peripatetic Philoſopher, the Preceptor of Ptolemy Philometor: as alſo Eupolemus, Demetrius, and the two Philos. Some alſo wrote hiſtories in Greek, and after the manner of the Greeks; as Jaſon the Cyrenean, and the Author of the ſecond book of Machabees, who made an Epitome of his hiſtory;† and the famous hiſtorian Joſephus.

Alexandria was the place, where the greateſt number of theſe Jews applied themſelves

* Buxtorf. Syn. cxi. † 2 Mac. ii. 23.

to the Greek literature. The other Jews contented themſelves with ſpeaking the Greek, ſo as to be underſtood, that is to ſay, badly, and retaining the turn of their native language; and in this barbarous Greek that the tranſlations of the Old Teſtament, and the originals of the New are written. The Apoſtles and Evangeliſts contented themſelves with a perſpicuity and conciſeneſs of ſtyle, deſpiſing all the ornaments of language, and making uſe of that which was the fitteſt to make them underſtood by the common people of their own nation: ſo that, to underſtand perfectly their Greek, a perſon muſt underſtand the Hebrew and Syriac.

The Jews of the latter times were much employed in reading the Law and the whole of the ſacred Scripture. They contented not themſelves with a literal interpretation of it, they diſcovered therein ſeveral figurative ſenſes by Allegories, and diverſe appropriations. This we ſee, not only in the New Teſtament, and in the writings of the moſt ancient Fathers, who had any diſputes with them;* but likewiſe in the books of Philo, in the Talmud, and the moſt ancient Hebrew Commentaries on the Law, which they call, the Great Geneſis,† the Great Exodus, &c. They had theſe figuratives ſenſes by tradition from their fathers.

But, in the whole, the manners of the Jews of the latter times, were exceedingly

* See St Juſtin Dial. cum Tryph. † Beroſith Raba.

corrupted

corrupted. They were fooliſhly proud of their being of the race of Abraham, and puffed up with the promiſes of the reign of the Meſſias, which they knew to be at hand, and which they repreſented to themſelves, as full of victories and temporal proſperities. They were intereſted, avaricious, and ſordid, particularly the Phariſees, who, in general, were great hypocrites. They were faithleſs and inconſtant, ever ripe for ſedition and rebellion, under the pretence of ſhaking off the yoke of the Gentiles. In a word, they were violent and cruel, as may be ſeen by what they made JESUS-CHRIST and the Apoſtles ſuffer, and by the unheard of miſchiefs they did to one another, both during the time of the whole civil war, and during the laſt ſiege of Jeruſalem.

§ XXXIV.——TRUE ISRAELITES.

IT was, however, amongſt this people, that the tradition of Virtue, as well as that of Doctrine and Religion, were preſerved. Even, in the latter times, there were rare examples of Sanctity, viz. St Zachary and St Elizabeth his ſpouſe: St Joſeph, and the holy old man, Simeon; Anna, the Prophetes; Nathaniel; the holy Doctor Gamaliel, and ſo many others taken notice of in the hiſtory of the New Teſtament. All theſe holy perſonages, and in general, all the ſpiritual Jews, who were circumciſed in heart, as well as body, were children of Abraham, much

much more by imitating his faith, than by their birth. They believed, with a ſtedfaſt faith, in the Prophecies and promiſes of God. They waited, with patience, for the redemption of Iſrael, and the reign of the Meſſias, which they ſighed after: but they ſaw very well, that their hopes were not to be confined to this life. They believed the reſurrection of the body, and the Kingdom of heaven. Thus the grace of the Goſpel meeting with theſe holy diſpoſitions, it was an eaſy matter to make perfect Chriſtians of theſe true Iſraelites.

THE END.

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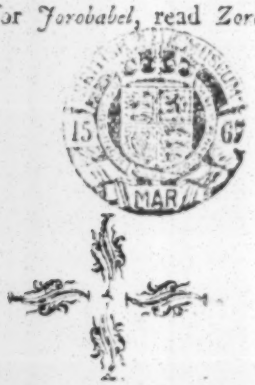
* N. B. From hence to the end there is a miſtake in numbering the Section by the repetition of Sect. XXIII. inſtead of XXIV. which overſight the Reader is deſired to excuſe.

P. 180. l. 20. for *Jorobabel*, read *Zorobabel*.